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[AGAINST HER WILL.]

## ELGIVA, OR, THE GIPSY'S CURSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Snapt Link," "Evelyn's Plot," "Sybil's Inheritance," &c., &c.

### CHAPTER XXI.

Open thou thy strong hall, let the bards of old be seen.  
We sit at the rock but there is no voice,  
No light but the meteor of fire.  
Oh, from the rock in the hill,  
Oh, speak, ye ghosts of the dead!  
Oh, whither are ye gone to rest?

It was perhaps some fortnight or more after the mysterious interview which Juan De Castro had held with his uncle in the vast cave of whose very locality he was ignorant.

It might be that the excitement and the natural elasticity of youth had renovated with extraordinary rapidity the vigour both mental and bodily of the invalid. Certainly he presented a very different aspect from the wan delicacy that had marked his appearance on that memorable occasion. There was a light in his eye with a healthful hue on his cheeks that, in spite of his extreme thinness and the sunken cheeks which still proved the severity of his sufferings, gave some promise of restoration to health, and on the occasion when he again presented to the reader there was a deep flush on his cheek almost unnatural in its hue, which seemed to betoken the presence of even feverish and dangerous excitement.

His eyes were fixed with a glittering eagerness on the mouth of the cave, or rather the hangings that formed a picturesque entrance to the chamber, and when at length the sound of footsteps came on the ear he started from the spot where he was rather crouching than reposing with any sort of ease, and sprang forward in the direction of the sound.

It was somewhat muffled, but still he could tell that more than one person was approaching, and his heart beat high and rapidly at the certainty of the impending crisis of his fate.

On they came, soft and muffled, as we have said, and when at last the curtain was raised and two figures appeared he perceived that one of them was masked, though in the other the features of his uncle were plainly exposed to view.

"Well, Juan, are you ready?" said the uncle, sharply. "Remember, we can have no drawing back, no child's play. There are preparations of grave omen, there are engines at work whose magnitude you can scarcely comprehend. You will pay dearly for the folly if you either draw back from terror or break afterwards the oaths you are about to take. This is the last moment for decision. If you fear your destiny, if you have not courage to snatch the noble prize within your grasp, then say it at once, and remain in the degrading obscurity that is your present position."

It was impossible not to feel some thrill of fear at the words and manner of the relative who had ever been so stern and unrelenting to him, still more not to shrink from that gloomy, cloaked, masked figure that stood like a supernatural guest at his side.

But one word rested on his heart, one image was engraved there, and that word was Elgiva's name, that image was Elgiva's fair form and features. To win her he would endure all, even risk death itself, for without her life would have little charm.

The pause was but momentary. The next instant the answer came fair and clear.

"I despise your insinuations. I am brave as yourself when there is real and open danger to be met, and even the dark, disguised terrors you put before me cannot daunt me. There will be vengeance for my death should I fall a sacrifice, and if I live I shall know how to punish deceit and wrong. I am ready."

"So be it then," said Harold, with a scornful smile. "On your own head be the risk now. You have been warned and have rejected the warning. All is prepared. You have but to come."

Juan took a few steps forward with impulsive rapidity, but his uncle laid his hand on his arm to restrain him.

"Stop," he said, "stop. You have something to go through first; you must be blindfolded ere you

are conducted to the spot where you are expected. Previous to the ordeal being encountered you are to remain in ignorance of the approach to the scene to which you are to be introduced. Your eyes must be bandaged ere you are taken from this spot."

It was very much like an indignity, and one from which the young man instinctively shrank, but he felt that it was a necessity, and, with a proud gesture of impatience, he bowed his head for the impending ceremonial.

A large handkerchief was drawn from a corner of the apartment and tied with almost painful tightness over his eyes, till all was as complete darkness as if their sight was actually gone. Then each hand was taken by either of his companions and he was led slowly and carefully from the spot.

He could scarcely judge of the direction in which he was taken, but he fancied that it was through an outlet other than the one by which his companions had entered that he was conducted from the spot, and there seemed something cold in the air, and the ground on which they trod was damp and chill to the feet.

It might have been perhaps some fifty or a hundred yards which they traversed in this kind of atmosphere ere they came to some steps.

"Six steps here," said the man whose voice was strange to him.

They went up and again there was a pause. Once more the voice spoke:

"Twelve steps, then two."

Juan obeyed the behest and followed the impulse of the hands that led him on till they at last arrived at a complete pause.

"Now," said the voice, "now are you prepared? It is your last chance."

"Perfectly," was the reply; "only lose no time."

There was a grating of a handle, a sound as of heavy boards moving from their post, and Juan was once more led forward. The same sound came on his ear again and he felt as if in a different and purer atmosphere.

"Now!" again said the same tones.

Then a hand busied itself with the folds of the handkerchief, the knot was unfastened, and Juan's

eyes were opened, but for a few seconds only, as it appeared, on a dark and well nigh too confused and obscure a scene for mortal vision to discern its constituent parts.

As his eyes grew accustomed to the dim light and recovered from their recent pressure he began to distinguish by degrees the objects around.

At the end of the large, arched apartment, which was gloomily hung round with black, was a kind of raised dais, with a table and pedestal draped in the same sombre hue, and on the other side of this raised tribunal, as it evidently was intended to be, sat some three men, all wearing the same long disguising cloaks and with the same mysterious signs and hieroglyphics on the drapery. They wore also a thin disguising covering to their faces, through the openings of which the dark, glittering orbs and red lips appeared in a strange relief, though without giving the slightest clue to their identity.

Juan felt his blood chill at the sight of the dark physiognomies of men upon whom he instinctively felt his very life might depend. But he had sworn to himself not to betray the slightest sign of emotion or alarm, and he calmly awaited the next scene in the drama.

He had not long to wait. One of the men, whom he guessed to be the principal, spoke in a solemn, somewhat hoarse voice:

"Young man, what is your name—I mean that by which you have hitherto been called?"

Juan calmly gave his accustomed appellation.

"Then we are to understand that all you may say or undertake under that name would be considered as binding upon you, since you are not at present known by any other—is it so?" pursued the voice.

"Certainly. I am not in the habit of denying my words or actions when I am conscious that I have committed them," returned Juan, proudly.

"It is well," was the reply. "Brothers," continued the same speaker, "you may proceed to the usual business we admit any neophyte to the fraternity."

The men left the side of their apparent superior and walked up to Juan.

"Young man," they said, "you are about to undergo the ordeals of fire, earth, and water, and if you endure them as a man and a brother worthy of the great and holy society and fraternity should, then you will be admitted to the oaths, the privileges, and the responsibilities of the order. Are you prepared?"

"I am," was the firm reply, though Juan's heart well nigh stopped its beating at the dark and ominous words.

The men left him for a moment, and the one who had accompanied Harold Farino to the apartment where Juan had lain so long alone and helpless proceeded to draw off his outer garments and leave his arm stripped and bare to the very shoulder.

Scarcely had the operation been completed than the others returned, bearing a red-hot iron, which, without a moment's delay, was laid on the bare and sensitive arm close to the shoulder.

It was agonising pain, was that branding process, as a Maltese cross was heavily fixed on his flesh; but he neither flinched nor groaned as it went on, and a sort of grim smile of satisfaction could be distinguished through the disguising crapes that covered the features of the tormentors.

"It is well," they said. "If you are equally firm in your other ordeals you will not have long to wait ere you enter on your new duties and honours."

They drew the sleeve over the tormented arm, and placing the bandage again over the eyes, they led him from the spot where he stood through a long and narrow passage, to judge from the time it consumed and the close feeling of the walls upon them.

"Now," said the men, "once more your courage will be tried, young man. Steel your muscles and you will not repent the endurance."

They unveiled his eyes as they spoke, and Juan did indeed feel that the caution was necessary at the scene which presented itself.

A coffin, draped and covered as if for the dead, stood ready for some occupant, and at its side was a yet more fearful accompaniment, in the shape of a yawning grave.

Juan shuddered in spite of himself.

"Who—what is this for?" he gasped, hoarsely.

"For you," said the man. "You must, ere you take the solemn vows expected of you, realise the torments and the punishments that await their breach. Know then, young man, that the torture you have just been subjected to is but a taste of that which would accrue from faithlessness, after which a long and lingering death would ensue that would give you a hundred times its bitterness ere your spirit left the body. Yes, you must enter this coffin and be lowered into that grave for a certain space, and, as you lie there in your solitude, figure to yourself the terror that would await you if you were really untombed there without hope of deliverance."

It was a terrible ordeal, one which almost seemed to threaten reason, if not life itself. But Juan knew, or at any rate guessed full well, that there would be

a yet more terrible alternative were he to attempt to draw back now from the path on which he had entered. He breathed to himself that one word which carried with it so magic a spell.

"Elgiva, Elgiva, it is for your dear sake, who endured so much for me," he murmured, inwardly. Then, with a firm if colourless face, and a step that did not visibly tremble, whatever its real quivering might be, he stepped into that living tomb, and in another instant he felt himself lowered into the yawning chasm that was prepared for him.

It was a dreadful sensation that thrilled through his frame, a deathly faintness to which he well nigh succumbed came over him. But he compressed his lips firmly, so that no sound should escape them, and the men proceeded in their task undisturbed by remonstrance or comment from their victim.

"Farewell," they said as they turned to leave the spot. "A tremendous stake is at issue. It is for you to deserve its high reward."

The steps and the voice died away.

Juan was alone. Would it be for ever? There were buzzing voices in his ears and in his brain that whispered frightful, maddening fancies.

Would they leave him there to die? Was all this grim pageantry but a mocking invention of his uncle to repay with interest the contempt with which his daughter's love had been repaid? Was the death intended for him not to be under the denomination of actual murder, since he had himself consented to the ordeal?

It was a fearful prospect to lie there alone, unprotected, starving, and in darkness, till death came as a release.

Juan was young, and though he had said truly that life without Elgiva had few charms yet it was sad to yield it up so young and in so hideous a manner.

No wonder if his eyes swam and his brain was whirling for some time after his tormentors left him, no wonder that he at last lost consciousness in the fearful position which had been assigned to him.

How long he lay there he never knew, but when his senses again returned there was a sudden flashing of light, accompanied by the approach of steps, which proved he had not been altogether deserted.

It was some moments, however, ere the men arrived at the spot, and Juan had time to recover in a manner his self-possession and not to betray the intense horror that had overcome his spirit to such weakness.

Ere the dark figures again stood at the side of the coffin his eyes had regained in some degree their steadiness of vision and his cheeks were not so utterly corpse-like as the light of hope brought some warmth to their cold surface.

"Are you there?" they questioned.

"Yes," he replied, with stern brevity, lest the voice should belie the brave steadiness of his spirit.

"It is well," they said. "There have been those who have lost reason if not life in the ordeal you have just gone through. However, as we told you, you shall not repeat your misdeeds if you complete your probation."

There seemed an age ere the cords were tightened and the terrible bed drawn up from the earth in which it had sunk.

At last Juan stepped from its recess and once again stood on the ground, firm and erect on his feet, with a sense of security that had never even occurred to him before.

"You have nearly completed your probation now," they said. "There is but one more proof—that of the water. You must endure for a few moments that trying torture that would be one of your punishments should you fail in your allegiance, then you must take the solemn oath that completes your novitiate."

Juan comprehended but too well their meaning. He had heard of the terrible punishment of that dropping water—slow, sure, even—on the head, which well nigh banished sense and reason from the sufferer. But it was not to be for long; it was but as a brief trial, a foretaste as it were of what should never occur, and he moved himself to go through it as a brave man should.

In after days the young man could never think without a shudder of that fearful ordeal, which he only tasted for a brief space. He could scarcely imagine the full horror of that long, long, living torture of that drop, drop, drop on the agonised nerves, the fearful punctuality of its fall, the gradual fevering and maddening of the senses as time went on.

But it ceased with him at last. The cords that kept him under its influence were unloosed, and he was at length conducted back to the chamber from which he had come under the tutelage of his gloomy guards.

Once more he stood in view of the three once again ranged in dark power behind the terrible tribunal, and the voice which had now lost some of its sternness sounded in his ears.

"Juan De Castro, welcome. You have endured the three trials with the bravery and firmness that should be the characteristics of a man who will keep his pledged word. Now it remains for you to take

the oath which finally admits you into our fraternity. But, remember, should you ever be tempted to break the vow then you will not, in any one recess of the globe, be able to escape the personal and final infliction of those tortures and death of which you have had a foretaste. Bring hither the necessary forms," he said, turning to the man who had assisted to bring the young man from the prison cell.

They were a ghastly array, and the book that was brought and the oath that was dictated were awe-inspiring and fearfully thrilling and solemn.

But Juan scarcely comprehended the full meaning of the latter. His mind was well nigh wandering with all he had undergone, his brain reeling, and his heart faint beyond physical power to endure.

The words were repeated almost mechanically, the signature affixed to a paper that was given to him without the document having been even fully and clearly perused.

Then the men rose from the judgment-like seat, and, with a sign to Harold, who had remained in mute and solemn silence during the entire scene, they disappeared through some hidden opening.

Harold approached his nephew with a dreary smile, that scarcely seemed in keeping with his harsh features.

"Now," he said, "leave Juan, noble descendant of a brave man, I can facilitate you on their worthy offspring. You have deserved your high destiny, and it is for you to assume the dignity, the wealth, and the happiness that you have fairly won. Come with me," he added, giving his hand to the exhausted young man with a half-respectful deference that had never before marked his conduct. "Come with me, and I will, at last, reveal to you the long-hidden mystery that has been wrapped in so thick a web—dependent on such a tangled and doubtful ravelment. At length the crisis has come, and I can punish the guilty and raise the innocent to the honours and the rights of which they have been so long deprived."

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

When, then, just entering on his prime and under a sense in the combined clarity with childhood's simplest mind, first taught at my singing soul to move with hope towards the heaven of love.

The return of the season again found the fashionable world in London.

The first drawing-room had been held, and the opera brought computed in its full perfection and with its usual prestige.

Scarcely any of those who had been in the habit of frequenting the busy metropolis but had found their way to the nasal haunts, and taken their places in the long throng which filled the gay saloons, the public places, and the parks to the very pitch of excitement and gaiety.

Every day's journal contained the announcement of some new arrival in the world of fashion, and among the last of these paragraphs was the following:

"The Count Arnheim, Earl of Chetwode, and his daughter, the Lady Elgiva, arrived yesterday at their residence in Grosvenor Square. We regret to learn that the youthful heiress, who last year excited much enthusiasm in the beau monde, is in very delicate health."

Such was the paragraph that met the eyes of the fair girl to whom it referred on the morning after their arrival in the splendid but to her gloomy mansion in the metropolis.

A faint smile crossed her lips at the scant grains of truth that mingled with the pompous flourish of the announcement.

She was changed. There could be no doubt of that when the eyes rested on her softer and fainter bloom, on her less rounded cheeks, on the eyes whose flashing vivacity was now tempered with a melting sadness that was more touching than dazzling than her former joyous brilliancy.

"Alas, alas!" she murmured as she threw down the paper which had been brought up with her coffee into the morning-room. "If it were only the health, but it is the heart, the brain, the spirit that are affected."

She had scarcely spoken the words when the door opened, and her father entered with a bundle of letters and cards in his hand.

"Here, Elgiva," he said. "I hope you are well enough to read and decide on all these civilities that have already been paid to us. See, there are about fifty cards that will have to be properly answered, and their invitations decided upon. I do not expect you to accept any but the most eligible, but at the same time I should not choose you to retire at all from the gay world lest evil reports should be spread about the cause of the seclusion."

He seated himself as he spoke and poured the ample contents of his card-dish on the table.

His daughter gazed at them with a careless indifference in her look and gesture that evidently irritated her father.

"Did you hear me, Lady Elgiva?" he said, in a stern tone.



"Certainly, papa," she replied, quickly, "but I really care so little about any of these things that it is your wishes alone that I am ready to carry out as far as my strength will allow."

"Strength, my child?" he repeated, in a softer tone. "Elgiva, should one like you, in the first bloom of youth and beauty, speak of bodily health? It will be your own fault, my child, if your strength be not rather recovered by this change and variety. Elgiva, be advised, be rational, my love. If it were not for the wild fancies you have taken—which, thank Heaven, have been baulked, though not from any action of mine—you would have enjoyed all the brilliant health which is only the natural portion of your age and your race."

A flash of resentful pride crossed the girl's face.

"Father," she said, "let that be for ever at rest between us. I would fain observe the duty of a child, and not express what I yet cannot but feel of resentment and grief. I am sufficiently a true daughter of my race to know how to endure the suffering I have before me. Only do not push me too far, do not taunt me with what is no fault of mine, or I may perhaps be driven to say what would be very painful to me to remember in after days."

The count's eyes had somewhat drooped under the half-indignant, half-scornful flash of his daughter's gaze, and his next words were gentler and more depressing.

"Well, Elgiva, I do not wish to be hard upon you, though you cannot but suppose that it has been very mortifying to me that my only child and heiress should injure her prospects and health and degrade her birth and family by an unworthy and absurd fancy. However, I will compromise the matter with you so far. I shall not insist on your mingling as entirely in the gaiety of the season as you might otherwise have done, but the choicest of the *fêtes* and entertainments I shall certainly desire you to accept, lest there should be any scandal in the world as to the cause of your seclusion. You will therefore be so good as to look over these cards and invitations with me, and we will then decide on those to be accepted and those declined on the score of your delicate health and, I may add, your betrothal to the Prince Charles."

"Which will never be fulfilled till I have some better satisfaction as to the fate of him who has saved my life," she returned, with the unnatural calmness of manner that she had of late assumed. "Father, there is too terrible a mystery about his and Lena's disappearance for me to ever dream of giving my hand to any man who may have been guilty of such crime."

"Then I can only tell you that Prince Charles has both in your presence and in private made the most solemn asseveration that he has no idea of the time or place or manner in which these two unfortunate vagrants disappeared," returned the count, earnestly. "Elgiva, whatever may be your prejudices, however you may choose to malign and to doubt your father's wisdom or his love, I can at least expect credence and confidence from you as to that transaction. Child," he continued, more sadly, "it is indeed a terrible punishment for my past errors, whatever they may have been, for my own, my only child to refuse her credence to me, her obedience in the most important matter of her life."

His voice trembled and eyes moistened as he spoke, and Elgiva's heart was touched in spite of herself at the unmistakable evidence of emotion.

She suddenly rose from her seat, and with a total change of manner cast herself in her father's arms.

"Father, father, forgive me. I would not willingly cost you one pang or bring one unpleasant memory to your heart," she said, pressing her lips to his quivering mouth. "But you would not desire to secure the misery of your only child or to be the victim of a bad, cruel man's perfidy. And if I remain firm in such resistance it may be that you will thank me one day for my apparent obstinacy. Now I am ready," she continued, in a lighter and more cheerful tone. "Let us dismiss this disagreeable subject till it is more pressed upon our decision. I need no deliberation to guide my conduct in the matter."

And, with a collected coolness that gave her a strange command over her father's more troubled and vacillating mood, she quickly began her task of inspecting the mass before her.

Some of the cards were cast carelessly aside without more than momentary consideration.

Others were placed for more deliberate choice, till she came to one that appeared to excite more surprise and attention.

"What have you there, my love?" asked the count as he perceived she paused in her examination.

"Only a note that is rather strangely worded," she said, still inspecting the billet. "It is from the Duchess of San Alva, with an especial request that I will take part in some private theatricals or characters, or something of the kind, in which the fair new debutante of the season—to use her own expression—will take part. Now, of course, we are in ignorance as to this stranger," she added, "and yet it appears from such emphasis being laid on her presence that there must be something extraordinary about her."

"My Elgiva is not jealous! I should imagine there can be little fear of any rival surpassing her."

The girl laughed half scornfully. "I care little now, papa, for any such nonsense," she returned, "whatever might once have been the case. But I certainly shall decline," she added, muttering, "I have an especial objection to such exhibitions, except in the country and among those I know well."

The count was looking all the time at the handwriting, which was foreign in its small, crabbed style and the slight imbecilities of its language. "Elgiva, do you remember this duchess?" he asked, drearily. She thought for a moment and she replied: "I met so many strangers last year, papa, that I really have rather a confused recollection of several I saw during the season. Still I do remember the name, and I think we had cards left and an invitation which we could not accept, so that—if I am not mistaken—we never met at all."

The count mused with a troubled air. "Surely," he muttered, "surely it cannot be the same! No, no; it was but a wild fancy. She must have been dead long since—not now in the gay world. I am an idiot to date all from that. Perhaps it may be the daughter-in-law, or even relative of some one I once knew by that name. Elgiva," he resumed, in a tender voice, "in any case I think you had better not decline her kindness. You can surely waive your scruples for a few hours and accept the chance of shining, as you should, before the gay world by the side of this debutante. Elgiva, it is my pleasure that you should go," he repeated, with inexplicable sternness.

The girl hesitated. "If you will it I shall certainly go, papa," she said, "but not as a sharer in the theatricals; I shall go if you wish to the party, though I should much prefer staying away."

"And be lost in the throng," he said, angrily; "when others are shining in the full sun. No, it shall not be, Elgiva, my child. If you have any love, any remaining sense of obedience to me, then you will obey me in this. Child, you would sacrifice far more for a stranger, a vagrant—surely you can yield so much to a father."

It was certainly a somewhat irresistible appeal, and the girl's eyes were cast down as she mused over the circumstances and her own duty.

Yet she shrunk from the exertion thus required of her while her dearest affections and hopes were in the balance. Should she not violate the sacredness of her love and the memory of him who had suffered so much for her by entering into such gaudy gaieties? Still Elgiva had a fund of practical firmness and sense that was perhaps not usual with one so young and brought up in the very warmth of enervating luxury and tenderness.

"Father," she said, "will you tell me just one thing, and I promise not to pry into your secrets farther than it may suit you to confide them to me. Is there any deeper motive than mere capricious jealousy for my supposed rival that induces you to urge this repugnant sacrifice on me? I am sure you would not deceive me," she added, with a half-dignified haughtiness that might well carry something to her father's heart. "You would not stoop to obtain my compliance by even a passing deception."

"No," he said, firmly. "No, Elgiva; I will accept your noble trust. I will confess to you that there are reasons of terrible strength that make me anxious you should conciliate this foreigner and disarm the slightest suspicion on her part. It may be a too susceptible alarm—it may be the weakness of enfeebled strength and approaching age that makes me think so. But, in any case, I would desire to be safe. I would ask it as a favour—a boon of my only child—to save me from any such danger or uneasiness."

There was scarcely a possibility of resisting such an earnest, terrible appeal, and Elgiva's heart told her that she was in truth rather doing a bitter penance than indulging in the slightest gaiety in such compliance.

"As you will, father," she said, "as you will. Only I shall go through it as a filial duty, as a faint imitation of the bravery and the self-sacrifice of him who has been so cruelly injured and whose memory I shall ever mourn while life lasts. What is the next step to be taken in it?" she asked, with some haughtiness. "Am I to request an interview with this stranger duchess and inquire what she demands of me?"

Elgiva did not speak so cruelly," he returned.

"You must know—you must see—that there is a deep if long-buried misery in my heart that I dare not even console by sharing it with any human being. Child, you fancy you are miserable and to be pitied," he said, more passionately than he seldom allowed himself to speak, "but, if you could guess but one-hundredth part of the agony that conscience and terror occasion you would think your suffering but a light and bearable endurance, such as is a Paradise compared to mine. Now once again I would request you to complete your sacrifice—if you so call it—by appearing not to consider it one. Be sweet and peaceful and bright, as your own natural self, my darling, and I can scarcely fear that any one can resist the fascination you can throw around you if you will."

The girl shook her head sadly.

"Alas, papa! There is one who is hard and relentless as iron, whatever might be the power exerted over him. Do not flatter yourself that I, or anything save self-interest and ambition, would avail to overcome any purpose of his. It is but bravery and firmness that can avail, and that he shall not find wanting in your daughter if she be put to the proof."

There was indeed an exchange of characters in the parent and child at that moment.

The daughter, even in her submission, appeared superior and even queenly in her humility, while the count, with all his years, his paternal authority, and his pride, was fain to sue to the girl he had brought up from her infancy as his child.

There was little more said, save to arrange Elgiva's reply to the invitation thus given, and then she quietly completed her task, and with a brief caress rose from her post, and, requesting her father to leave her for the task before her, she proceeded calmly to execute her promise.

At the very day and hour when this scene was passing there were two equally engrossed with important consultations on plans and retrospects.

Amice De Castro was reclining on a low pile of cushions, which it was, as it seemed, her very depliance to prefer to any other couch. It might perhaps be one of the remains of that gipsy tent life, that had so long been her experience.

There was something in her attitude and whole air which spoke of the unrestrained and lithic grace of these children of nature and wandering lives.

Perhaps it was that which spread so strange a fascination round the girl to those who had only been accustomed to more conventional forms and manners.

Even the titled dame who sat opposite to her in that luxurious boudoir could not but confess and yield in a measure to its power.

"Amice," she said, "do you know that you will have to go through a weary task if you would really shine in this coming festivity? It is no easy matter to learn by heart, and also to acquire the spirit and the style of a heroine in one of these elaborate sensation plays. Were you to fail, I fear your mortification would be even greater than any triumph you can hope to attain."

Amice drew herself up proudly from her soft cushions.

"Have you asked her—I mean Lady Elgiva? Is she going to act also?" she inquired.

"I do not doubt it. I have a way of ensuring her compliance," replied the Duchess of San Alva.

"Then you need not fear my failure," said Amice, proudly. "I could not even waste an hour in sleep till I was perfect, were it necessary. I had rather die than yield to and fail before that proud girl!"

"That would scarcely avail, it seems to me," returned the duchess, with a half-satirical smile. "It would rather tend to ruin your beauty and blight every chance of brilliancy or success. However, if you give up your whole mind to it, and are as lovely and graceful in 'Elvira' as you are in your own proper character, I do not think there will be much to fear."

"My own proper character!" said the girl, scornfully. "It is difficult to decide what is my real position. Am I a gipsy girl, a high-born maiden, or a bride elect—which, my kind does not?"

"Time will show, Amice," returned the duchess, calmly. "But much will depend on yourself, in such will hang on the events of this season, on the fascination and the power that you can exert over him whom you love and who you desire to love you. Ay, yet more, if you can win one, whom you have already caught for your admirer and your slave, the future Marchioness of Easton might well bid defiance to the strife of envious tongues or the contempt of the proudest."

"But it is not so. I do not love him. I will never be happy if he whom I do desire for my husband be taken by another."

"But it shall not be, it shall not be," eagerly interrupted the duchess; "only exert yourself, only be what you are capable of being, and then there can be no one who would be likely to surpass you in the opinion or the affections of any human being."

Then you have decided, have you, on undertaking the character; you will not fear the talent or the beauty or education of your rival?" she resumed, quietly.

"No," said the girl, proudly. "No, there need be no fear where there are a strong will and a warm heart. Rely on me. The prize shall be mine, the palm awarded to me by the most critical of tongues. Ah," she added, clasping her hands eagerly, "if she do but come, if she do but give me the chance of surpassing her in all that she most boasts of possessing."

Even as she spoke the words a servant entered the room with a scented billet on a salver.

The duchess glanced at the crest and then hastily tore open the missive.

"Yes," she said. "Be at rest. The Lady Elgiva has accepted my invitation, and we shall soon have the opportunity of testing the powers of the peeress and the peasant, the patriot and the Zingara maiden, for love and war."

(To be continued.)

### HOPS.

THE hop is a perennial, but to prepare the plants for a new ground or "garden," as these plantations are generally called, the young shoots are taken off the old roots and planted in beds prepared for their reception, so as to establish the plants previously to their being transplanted to the hop-garden itself. When thus transplanted they are placed usually in threes, that is, three plants together in a triangular form, leaving about six inches between each plant. These groups of three are arranged in rows usually about six feet apart, the groups in each row alternating with those in the adjoining row.

The appearance of an English hop-garden, when the plants are fully grown, cannot be likened to any other branch of British culture. Indeed, it has frequently been compared to the aspect of the vineyards of Southern Europe, as much from the resemblance of the habits of the two plants as from the similarity of the mode of gathering the fruit.

The hop frequently requires some little care and attention to secure the perfect fertilization of the flowers, the plants being dioecious—that is, the male and female flowers growing on separate plants. The male or pollen-bearing ones are therefore frequently grown with the females, so as to ensure a perfect impregnation; for where there is an abundant supply of pollen the hops are more plentifully produced, and a finer kind is the result.

The effects of insect agency in fertilizing flowers, by carrying pollen from one plant to another, is well exemplified in the hop. Some planters, whose surrounding hedges are filled with the wild hop, which is always the barren or male plant, trust to the combined assistance of insects and the wind in disseminating the pollen from the wild to the cultivated plants.

The difference between the male and female flowers is that the former are in loose drooping panicles, and the latter in close catkins or cones, forming the hops of commerce; these cones are composed of a series of imbricated scales, each scale having at its base two inconspicuous flowers. There are other botanical distinctions too technical to enter on here.

Many varieties of hops are known in commerce, but the principal kinds in cultivation are "Goldings," "white bines," "grapes," "Jones's," and "Colgates." The first of these are of the choicest flavour, and are used chiefly for pale and strong ales. White bines are also of a fine flavour, and of great strength, and are used for keeping ales. Grapes and Jones's are used for a similar purpose; while Colgates are usually of a coarser, stronger flavour, and are used mostly for the rougher kinds of ales, as well as for porter and stout.

Johnston in his "Chemistry of Common Life" says, "Though the specific action of each of the chemical principles contained in the hop flower has not been very well ascertained, the united action of all of them together is well known. The tinctures and extracts of hops which we use in medicine and introduce into our beers contain them all; so that all the virtues of the hop, in whichever of the ingredients it resides, are present in them in a greater or less degree. Hence well-hopped beer is aromatic, tonic, soothing, tranquillizing, and in a slight degree narcotic, sedative, and provocative of sleep. The hop also aids in clarifying malt liquors, assists the fermentation before all the sugar is converted into alcohol, and thus enables them to be kept without turning sour."

The bitter, aromatic property of the hop is due to a yellow resinous substance, which covers the scales and contains an active principle called "Lupulin." Hop flowers, upon distillation, have also been found to contain about eight per cent. of volatile oil; it is to the escape of this volatile narcotic property that the hop has been recommended for stuffing pillows for the sake of producing sleep. It

is said that hop-pillows were first prescribed in 1787 to George III.; and it is not a little remarkable that they should again have been had recourse to in the late severe illness of the Prince of Wales.

### SCIENCE.

THE LILUM AURATUM.—M. Pynaert says that the perfume of the flower of *Lilium auratum* is obnoxious to flies, which are rendered inert by it, and which disappear from a room in somewhat less than half an hour after the introduction of a bloom of this noble lily into it. Will some one try it?

THE INFLUENCE OF VEGETABLE PERFUMES.—An Italian professor has made researches which lead him to assert that vegetable perfumes exercise a healthful influence on the atmosphere, converting its oxygen into ozone, and thus increasing its oxidizing influence. The essences that develop the largest quantity of ozone are those of Cherry Laurel, Cloves, Lavender, Mint, Juniper, Lemons, Fennel and Bergamot; those that give it in less quantity are Anise, Nutmeg, Cajuput, and Thyme. The flowers of the Narcissus, Hyacinth, Mignonette, Heliotrope, and Lily of the Valley develop ozone in closed vessels. Flowers destitute of perfume do not develop it, and those which have but slight perfume develop it only in small quantities. As a corollary from these facts the professor recommends the use of flowers in marshy districts, and in places infested with animal emanations, as the powerful oxidizing influence of ozone may destroy them. The inhabitants of such regions should surround their houses with beds of the most odorous flowers.

CHLOROFORM AMONG THE CHINESE.—According to a reputed discovery by M. Stanislaus Julien, it appears that, so far back as the third century of our era, the Chinese were in possession of an anæsthetic agent which they employed in the same manner as we use chloroform and ether for producing insensibility during surgical operations. A description of this was discovered by M. Julien in a work preserved in the "Bibliothèque Nationale"—called "Kou-kin-tong," or a "General Collection of Ancient and Modern Medicines"—which appears to have been published in the sixteenth century. In a biographical notice of Hoa-tho—who flourished under the dynasty of Wei, between the years 220 and 280 of our era—it is stated that he gave the sick a preparation of chanvre (Ma-yo), who in a few moments became as insensible as one plunged in drunkenness or deprived of life; then, according to the case, he made incisions, amputations, and the like. After a certain number of days the patient found himself re-established, without having experienced during the operation the slightest pain. It appears from the biography of Han that this chanvre was prepared by boiling and distillation.

ROLLING OF SHIPS.—The following is a mode of recording the rolling of a ship in a seaway, indicating also the form of the waves:—A revolving cylinder, covered with paper and turned by clockwork, receives the marks made by several pens. One of these pens records time, jerks being given to it by an exact clock. The apparatus being placed at the centre of gravity of the ship, a pendulum oscillating in a plane transversely with the keel records continuously by a second pen the angles which the ship at each moment makes with the mean or effective surface of the wave. Another pen, actuated by a rocking arm, kept level by an observer on deck, and being pointed to the horizon, records by a third pen the angle the ship makes with the horizon. From the records thus obtained the amount of rolling of the ship may be at once shown, and the form of the wave could be easily worked out graphically. An apparatus has also been completed in which is employed a heavy stationary wheel so delicately supported as not to receive any rotation from the motion of the ship. This wheel, placed transversely in the ship will remain still without rotating, and thus supply the place of the horizontal bar above described, held level by the observer on deck.

A NEW VENTILATION FOR RAILWAY CARRIAGES.—The Queen's saloon carriage on the London and North-Western Railway has had affixed to it a new description of ventilator. Outside the carriage nothing strange is noticeable beyond three little projectors on the roof right over where the lamps are generally let in. These protuberances are what are called the caps of the ventilator. The movement of the train causes them to work and keep up a thorough ventilation inside each carriage to which it is affixed. The arrangement in the interior of the roof of the carriage is nothing more than an ornamental grating. Between the grating and the cap outside there is a cavity for the lamp. The cap is so constructed that ingress to wind and rain is wholly prevented. The cap rotates without noise, and by an ingenious mechanical arrangement creates an upward current which carries away all impure gases

that may be generated. This obviates the necessity of opening the windows of railway carriages in damp and cold weather—the only resource one now has to escape the offensive and deleterious atmosphere which too often pervades railway carriages. This cleverly arranged little appliance can be fixed upon any railway carriage without disturbing present arrangements. It improves some of them, for being placed over the lamps the ventilator supplies them with air, so that their illuminating power is maintained whatever may be the state of the weather. This ventilator can be as easily fitted into omnibuses, holds of vessels, etc., as railway carriages.

ELECTRIC RAILWAY BRAKE.—An experiment has recently been made at the Bow Station of the North London Railway of a new railway brake, in which electricity is the chief agent. The new brake is the invention of a gentleman named Olmstead, and appears to have been worked with success on some of the United States railways. The electric arrangement is as follows:—A horizontal swing shaft is placed within the car-truck parallel with the car-axle, on which shaft is a loose shell-pully, which receives motion from the car-axle against which it rests. Within the loose pulley is a fixed pulley keyed on the swing shaft. On the face of the fixed pulley are two powerful electro magnets, each capable of sustaining 300 pounds, so that their combined force is 600 pounds. These are connected by wires with a battery on the car, each car having its separate battery. A chain extends from the swing shaft to the brake lever. On the locomotive or van is a large Highton's battery. An ordinary telegraphic wire extends the whole length of the train underneath the carriages connected with each brake, and connected between the carriages by a simple device arranged instantaneously. On the locomotive or van a keyboard, by means of which the guard or driver can apply the electricity to the whole of the train at once, is placed—the wires connecting the batteries in each separate carriage. The wires extend to a key-board attached to the ceiling of the car, and the electric connection is made at this point by a simple lever or key worked by the bell-cord. On pulling the cord, or by the breaking of the coupling, the electric circuit is made and the magnets draw the loose and fixed pulley together, whereupon the swing shaft winds up the brake chain, and the brakes operate on the wheels and stop the train. The invention was tried by General W. B. Chapin, the agent to the "Electric Car Brake" in this country, between Bow and Poplar, and it appeared to work, as far as that short journey would permit one to judge, satisfactorily. The experiment will be repeated on a larger scale in a short time.

EDUCATION IN SPAIN.—Some years ago there was a legend about that Noah had been permitted to revisit the earth. He wandered about from country to country, ill at ease in each of them. Nothing was natural—nothing was as it used to be. Steamboats and railroads, telegraph wires and lucifer matches, with a thousand other innovations, met him at every turn. The legend says at length he reached Spain; then the sadness of his countenance changed, his eyes sparkled with delight, and, in the exuberance of his joy, he threw up his hat, and thanked Heaven that there was one country which remained just as he had left it.

DISCOVERY OF TOMBS.—In the commune of Hardthausen, about a league from Hagenau, some highly interesting tombs have been recently opened, which are supposed to be Celtic. Among them is one which contains most probably the remains of a chieftain. The head lay on a pillow of bark, and the breast and shoulders were pressed in by the planks containing the skeleton, which was loaded with ornaments. Round the neck were rings, and on the arms were bracelets, while rings were also found encircling the bones of the fingers. Rings also encircled the thighs and legs, and about the head were numerous pins, which had served as ornaments for the hair. On the breast was an oval copper-plate, on which lay a number of nuts in excellent preservation, and two nuts were found pushed in between the teeth.

EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT STIMULANTS.—The following is a translation of a paragraph found in the writings of Professor Von Liebig, the distinguished German chemist:—"The white wines are hurtful to the nervous system, causing trembling, confusion of language, and convulsions. The stronger wines, such as champagne, rise quickly to the head, but their effects are only of short duration. Sherry and strong cider are more quickly intoxicating than the generality of wines, and they have a peculiar influence on the gastric juices of the stomach. The intoxication of beer is heavy and dull, but its use does not hinder the drinker from gaining flesh. The drinkers of whisky and brandy are going to certain death. Red wine is the least hurtful, and, in some cases, really beneficial."



bye, and he will help you to find him. I will dress you now, and then ring for breakfast."

"Oh, ma'am, you are so good to me. I'll put you into my prayers every day, if you'll let me."

"You may indeed, darling, for I need prayers if any one does. Come—here is a new dress for you."

"For me—this nice dress for me, ma'am?" cried the child, delight in her young eyes.

"Yes, dear. I am glad you like it."

"Oh, so much, ma'am; but I'll never dare to wear it where I live. They'll take it from me, and sell it for gin, like they did the warm blanket, a good missionary gave to grandma to keep her warm o' nights."

"My poor child, Mr. Talmage and my father will have you and your grandparents moved into a better home, I hope, before the sun of this day sets. Let me get this dress on, and then Mary will wash you and comb your hair."

"Thank you, ma'am, I can do that for myself. I've had to, for grandma can't. How she'll miss me this morning! I am so afraid they're hungry. There wasn't but a little piece of bread left when I went out to carry a basket for Mr. Bellamy. 'Twas doing that I got lost. He is our landlord."

While the artless child thus rattled on Mrs. Zane was putting on her new dress, and now, having finished, she rang for Mary.

"Oh, ma'am, surely you are ill!" cried the servant as she entered the room. "You're as white as a ghost, and the eyes are sunk in your head till they look black as the night."

"Never mind, I am only tired, Mary. I sat up late waiting for Mr. Zane."

"The brute to keep an angel like you up and waiting!"

"Mary! never—never dare to speak in such a manner of my husband, or I shall certainly discharge you!"

"Oh, missis, don't speak that way to me who would die for you. But I couldn't help breaking out to see you suffering, and know who did it!"

"I know you meant well, Mary, and I excuse you this time. But you must remember that Mr. Zane is my husband, whatever he does. Gentlemen, now-a-days do many things, which we have to be blind to."

"You're right, ma'am; but, if we're blind, we can't be deaf to the voice of reason, can we?"

Mrs. Zane made no reply, but told her to take Nellie down and give her some breakfast.

"Shall I bring you nothing, ma'am?"

"You would have hard work to do that, Mary. You can bring me 'something.' A cup of coffee—that is all."

And Mrs. Zane tried to smile, but failed in the effort.

#### CHAPTER IV.

It was a tumble-down-looking public-house in one of the lowest localities in London, which Peter Bellamy occupied—a building that had not felt paint for fully half a century, with but few panes of glass, but plenty of rags in the windows; however as he let out all but the bar, where he sold his "fine imported" gins, brandies and whiskies, he cared little about repairing it.

Mr. Bellamy needed no sign when he stood in his own doorway. His six feet of muscular humanity was topped with a head of the bull-dog order, his face purple with the tints produced by the beverages which he used as well as sold.

On the morning following the day when the events occurred already noted in our story Mr. Bellamy was standing in the doorway, talking to a woman of his own class, who had been trying to borrow sixpence of him.

"Sure, Mister Bellamy, it's the luck I'll have, for I dreamed of two black cats and a white mouse, and that makes twenty-one I know. Lend me sixpence just and I'll pay ye that and the owld score next wake. Oh, Peter dear, can't ye say, standin' there as straight as a steeple and as blounin' as a holyhook in the garden. If ye'll not lend me the sixpence, jist trate me for the sake of our owld acquaintance."

"Not a penny, I say, till ye pay me what ye owe now," replied the ungallant Peter. "What d'ye want now, old man?"

The last question was addressed to a very old but, in spite of his threadbare clothes, respectable-looking man, who crept down the broken stairs from the upper part of the house, and now stood with bent form, partially supported by a cane in one hand while he rested the other on a barrel by the door.

"If you please my little Nellie, my dear granddaughter—have you heard of her to-day? She went on an errand for you yesterday, and we've not seen her since."

"What is she to me?"

"She may be nothing to you, sir, but she is all the world to me."

"Well, then, there she is, comin' this way with a well cove leadin' her by the hand. Maybe he's got money, and will want a taste of my whisky to take away the smell of the gutters."

"Oh, Nellie, Nellie, darling; where have you been? We were so afraid you had got lost or stolen!" cried the old man, tottering forward to meet the child, who came, led by the friendly hand of Mr. Talmage.

"I was lost, dear grandpa, but this kind gentleman found me and took me to a nice lady, who kept me all night and gave me a nice new dress. See, I have it on. And here is a basket full of bread and meat and cake for you and grandma—and this gentleman is going to take you to a nice new home away from our damp, nasty attic."

"What's that you're sayin'? Would you leave these quarters? I'd like to see you do it. It's on a door ye'd be carried, I'm thinkin'!" cried Bellamy, angrily.

"My good friend, you will oblige me by standing aside while I visit this child's grandmother," said Mr. Talmage, seeing the huge form of the landlord planted directly in his way.

"Stand aside? Is it that you mean, and me on my own property? Stand aside for the likes of you, indeed!"

"Yes, for I wish to get out of this foul atmosphere as soon as I can."

"Sooner than you like, maybe, for if I give one yell to the boys here they'll not leave a rag on ye or a bawbe to jingle in yer pockets. Maybe, though, ye'll behave like a gentleman and treat the crowd!"

For a crowd of ragged, blue-eyed, wicked-looking men and women had closed in around the party.

"Never—I despise strong drink and those who use it, or sell it!" said the brave Christian gentleman, turning with undaunted face towards the people, who glowered on him as fiends might look upon a saint.

"At him, boys—at him and strip off his fine feathers!" cried the angry landlord. "Teach him what our street is!"

"Hands off, vile ragamuffins!" shouted a lively little man, well but plainly dressed, who came rushing to the spot. "Know you no better than to offer violence to the minister of Heaven? Off to your dens, before my friend, Superintendent Simmons, gets here with the police!"

The crowd, more alarmed perhaps by the name just uttered than anything else, did scatter in a hurry, while Peter Bellamy slunk away into his den to fortify himself with another drink before he renewed his warfare.

"I thank you, Brother Merritt, for your timely interference!" said Mr. Talmage, warmly, as he grasped the hand of the new comer. "I do believe those rascals would have obeyed the wishes of the unprincipled man who has fled into his house."

"Yes—most likely they would have fallen upon you!" said the brave little man, himself a minister, "but I was on hand, and like David of old I would have smitten the Philistines right and left. But the weapon of Sampson, a little jawbone, did just as well you see. And now what more can I do for you, for I know you are on some good mission or you would not be here?"

"Thank you, I wish to remove a couple of old people and this little girl to apartments which Mr. Evert Everts has kindly given free for their use in one of his houses in a good locality."

"He is a good man and a true Christian. I will gladly help you—but hark!—hear that terrible cry! I must go and see if I can save life!"

And the good little man rushed into a shanty near at hand, whence came the fearful cry of "Murder!" shrieked out shrilly in a woman's voice.

(To be continued.)

#### PROPOSED SOCIETY OF MATCH MANUFACTURERS.

—A meeting of the principal manufacturers of vesuvians and lucifer matches in the metropolis was held the other day with the view of forming an amalgamated society, the objects of which will be to obtain a better price for their goods, to enable masters to meet strikes, and to establish a mixed uniform price for goods throughout the trade.

THE STANDARDS TAKEN BY NAPOLEON I.—The *Univers* has remarked that as the trophies of the wars of Napoleon I. are not to be seen at the Invalides they have probably been restored to the Germans. In reply to this the Paris correspondent of the *Independence Belge* writes that on the night of the 30th March, 1814, the 1,500 or 1,600 banners which hung under the dome of the Invalides were taken down and formed into a pile in the courtyard. The banners, with their lances, surmounted by Russian, Prussian, and Austrian eagles, were set on fire, and upon them were thrown other trophies, such as the sword and regal insignia of Frederick the Great. The ashes of this pile were soon swept up and

thrown into the Seine. Next day, when, after the entry of the allies, a Russian officer came to see the banners, General Darmaud showed him the place where they had been, and told him they had been burned on the previous night.

#### THE CONSTRUCTION AND COST OF RAILWAYS.

TUNNELS are avoided as far as possible, for, besides their costliness, they, if long, necessitate the constant use of lamps in the carriages. They are made only when the excavations would be more than 60 feet in depth, or when land proprietors force their adoption, in order to spare the amenity of grounds near a mansion. For this latter reason some short tunnels are known to have cost railway companies as much as 50,000*l*. The execution of underground railways in the metropolis has offered examples of tunnelling more extensive than were previously known in England, and at the same time popularized a method of subterranean transit almost as marvellous as anything in the way of viaducts across wide and profound chasms.

As regards viaducts, they consist of stone bridges of handsome architecture, or as commonly of malleable iron girders of various forms set in stone piers. In the construction of these stone and iron viaducts there is a growing boldness of conception, arising not only from the success of the famed railway viaducts across the Meusi Straits, the river Tamar, and the St. Lawrence, but from the greater experience and skill of engineers.

Owing to the obstructions offered by land-owners, and their excessive claims for amenity damages, also the opposition of rival companies, the cost of railways was at one time very much greater than it is at present. The expenditure incurred in securing legislative authority to construct railways was likewise enormous. The parliamentary cost of the Brighton Railway averaged 4,806*l*. per mile, of the Manchester and Birmingham 5,190*l*. per mile, and of the Blackwall 14,414*l*. per mile. The cost of carrying the Liverpool and Manchester line was 27,000*l*. It has been shown that the solicitor's bill for the South-Eastern Railway contained 10,000 folios, and amounted to 240,000*l*. These few facts, however, afford but a feeble idea of the reckless wastefulness of capital on railway undertakings; it is universally allowed that, under a better policy, not only a much better railway system might have been provided but a saving effected of at least fifty millions.

In ordinary cases railways with a double line are constructed in England at the cost of 12,000*l*. per mile, station-houses, signals, and all other fixed plant included. Single lines are made at perhaps a fourth less, but nowhere in the United Kingdom have they been executed so economically as in Scotland. There some single lines have cost for land and everything not more than about 5,000*l*. per mile—such economy, however, being greatly due to the fact that the undertakings were promoted and watched over by bodies of land proprietors deeply interested in restraining expenditure. Of these cheap Scotch lines a good example is offered by the Peebles Railway (practically a branch of the North British), extending to 18½ miles, the entire cost of which, land and station-houses included, was about 95,000*l*. The cost of rolling stock was additional.

Every railway, great or small, is at a considerable expense in keeping the line in proper working order, for which purpose a staff of officials is required. Besides, a general superintendent there is an effective staff of "plate layers," whose duty it is to watch over the permanent way, to make small repairs, and to report to the superintendent if anything is seriously deranged. The number of plate-layers on a good piece of road should not exceed three men to each two miles. To stimulate their vigilance a reward of 5*s*. is on some lines given for every broken rail that is promptly discovered. Plate-layers' cottages are erected at convenient distances along the railway. In some instances the cottage adjoins a level crossing, at which gates have to be kept shut across the line to admit the passage of carts, horses, etc., and opened only when trains give the signal of approach; in such cases (mostly on small lines, where economy is studied) the plate-layer's wife is constituted "gate-keeper." Latterly, Parliament has been reluctant to allow level crossings; and these are now chiefly confined to bye-ways or parish roads with little general traffic.

BARON ROTHSCHILD has, it is said, purchased East Lee House, East Cowes, for 8,000*l*., and that he intends to make it the headquarters of a new yacht club.

DISCOVERY OF ROMAN REMAINS IN GLOUCESTER.—Some interesting Roman remains have been brought to light on the premises of Mr. Rumsey, of Southgate Street. An excavation had to be made in the cellar, and at a depth of about 10 ft. from the surface

of the footway the workmen came upon the border of a tessellated pavement. The tesserae are of white and black, first in bands and next worked in a design like that of a carpenter's square. The floor is in excellent preservation. The pavement is laid parallel to the street, as it now exists.

## THE LILY OF CONNAUGHT.

### CHAPTER X.

I'll make assurance double sure,  
And take a bond of fate.  
Macbeth.

The most of Castle Connor on the south-western side extended to a considerable width, forming an irregularly shaped lake, fed by two or three mountain brooks, and emptied by the stream that watered the valley.

This body of water stretched away towards the monastery and to the foot of a mountain slope, on which stood a convent, hidden by trees. Across this lakelet, now slightly ruffled by the night breeze, Theresa boldly steered her course. Briskly they bounded along, for the skiff was light, and Theresa, trained in the mountain excursions with the princess, was a strong and expert rower. Their course was purposeless, for when she asked her mistress for directions, the ever-recurring answer was:

"On! Anywhere!—but on!"

At length the night wind freshened, the rippling waters began to heave, light, fleecy clouds drifted at intervals across the sky, making the moonlight wild and fitful in its effects. The scene around them became more gloomy and lonely. Castle Connor was a shapeless, indistinct mass, and the white tents upon the plain looked like gravestones, with glowworms coldly shining here and there between, while the faint sounds and flashing lights of such parties as were yet engaged in merrymaking gave the idea of a midnight dance of ghouls, with flickering corpse-lights. Still the command of the princess was:

"On, on! Anywhere, so it be onwards!"

Suddenly, as they were nearing the farther shore, the solemn notes of the monastery bell rose upon the air, and swept sobbingly over the water, and simultaneously a lighter, wilder peal sounded in symphony from the convent on the mountain side. Soon the notes of the organ and the voices of the chanters swelled tremulously up in the midnight hymn, filling the whole atmosphere with solemn, soothing melody.

But not these heavenly sounds did the ear of Eva O'Connor incline; for, nearer and clearer, from the wooded bank of the lake, came the wild notes of the harp heard that night before, and the same mournfully musical voice sang:

"Maiden, haste! the midnight hour  
Sounds from Conn's mossy tower;  
Bearded monk and sister pale  
Now the ear of Heaven assail,  
Sells and swells—  
Organ swelling—  
Let them chant their sin-born wail!  
But wouldst thou the future prove?  
Wouldst thou know the fate of love?  
Wouldst thou all the fortunes trace  
Of thyself and of thy race?  
Haste to weave the mystic spell,  
Royal daughter,  
Smite the water  
Of the fairy's haunted well!"

"Oh, princess, let us go back! It is unearthly! It is unholy!" whispered Theresa, with chattering teeth, as the strain died away.

But her mistress sat like one rapt, gazing fixedly at the part of the shore whence the voice had proceeded.

After a pause the music sounded again, but this time no voice accompanied it. It was a wild, phasing sound, becoming lower and lower, dying away in the distance, and, as if decided by this, the princess started on her feet and bent forward.

"I will follow it. Row to the shore, Theresa. Haste! The bells have ceased, and we may miss it. I am unhappy, Theresa, very unhappy. Better unravel at once this mystery. Do not speak! It is my fate, and I must yield to it. Be not afraid; no harm can reach the purest heart. Haste, Theresa, haste! A terrible foreboding is upon me, and a fear seizes me that I shall be too late. Rather than that I will dare all danger."

The trembling, awe-stricken girl propelled the skiff to the shore, and they got out and pulled it up on the strand. The spot on which they landed was high and grassy, the glade stretching down to within a few yards of the bank. At a little distance the trickling of water was heard, telling where one of the mountain rills fell into the castle lake.

The bright moonlight shone on the gray trunks and shaggy foliage of the outer trees, and darted in pale silver pencilings into the leafy aisles, but in the farther depths all seemed black and frightsome.

The wind whispered softly among the trees, but above this, and the trickle of the stream, and the

faint, rolling chant, and the ripple of the lake that sounded on the beach like the distant babble of children, they heard the weird tinkle of the harp, seemingly far, far before them in the gloomy depths of the forest, inviting them to follow.

"Come, Theresa," said the princess, taking her companion by the hand, and her own shook when she felt how cold and trembling it was. "Do not fear, dear girl! no harm will come to us. Heaven will protect us."

"Oh, mistress, why tempt its mercy?" whispered the girl, almost inaudibly.

"I cannot tell, Theresa; I cannot resist," said the princess, in a tone not much firmer than her attendant's. "I know—I feel that something dreadful is coming. The bale-light is before me—there—there in the forest depths it glows to lead me on! Come, come, we linger; let us follow it."

With trembling limbs and slow steps they entered the glade, their lengthened shadows going before them on the moonlit forest path like ghostly guides. The night wind fluttered the leaves and murmured among the gnarled boles of the trees, causing that strange sound which one seems to feel rather than hear, that oppressive hush, that noisy silence which so awes the night traveller in the woods—which seems like the whispering of giants above him, though through it the slightest musical sound, the breaking of a twig, the falling of a leaf, is startlingly audible.

The two quaking girls stole slowly along, hand in hand, like the babes in the wood, starting at every extra gasp, staring fearfully around, until they saw the reflections of their overstrained eyes dancing before them in fiery rings in the darkness.

They had got to the end of the moonlit path, their guiding shadows had been swallowed up in the general gloom, through which the nearest trunks were but dimly seen, and they paused, loth to leave the light for this doubtful darkness.

"Ah, Heaven's mercy!" suddenly gasped Theresa, cowering in fright to her trembling mistress, as a rustling sound broke through the forest whisper, and they were aware that something had fitted before them and was gone.

It was so sudden, so noiseless, so indistinct, that it looked less like the passage of a figure than the commotion of impalpable darkness itself. While their breathing was suspended, and the tremor still upon them, the notes of the harp sounded from the gloom with the constantly recurring strain:

"Haste to weave the mystic spell  
At the fairy's haunted well."

Eva, as if irresistibly drawn forward by the sound, tightened her clasp upon her companion's hand and hurried on with swift steps, going faster in the almost impenetrable gloom than she had done with the moonlight to guide and encourage her. And now, though they could see nothing, they felt that there was something—a breathing presence near them—nearer than the music seemed to be—leading them on.

The glade became narrower, less free from undergrowth, darker and more intricate. The chequered light that had occasionally twinkled overhead was no longer seen; the mournful gusts of wind were more frequent.

Occasionally the flutter of a frightened bird startled them, or the eyes of a rabbit gleamed through the gloom for an instant, then disappeared with a bounding crash. Then the ground became more uneven and ascended slightly. The murmur of waters fell upon their ears, and the air was damp and heavy, while the dripping of dew from leaf to leaf sounded like the patter of fairy feet rushing over the foliage.

Still, through all, they heard the guiding tinkle and felt the leading presence before them.

"We are entering the Fairy Glen, Theresa," whispered Eva. "These must soon be twilight. We shall then see who guides us."

Theresa shuddered, but did not speak.

"I am sorry I forced you to come, Theresa." "Oh, mistress, don't mind me," replied the girl. "I'm not afraid. But I was thinking that this fountain might rise and sweep us down the glen, and drown the castle, and fill the plain where all the soldiers are, as did the Boyne and Kilbarney and Lough Neagh, where the round towers and spires are buried in the white sands and the fishes play whirlingly with the weathercocks."

The princess made no remark on this fantastic fear, but pressed on more eagerly than ever, for the air became freer than before, and the sound of falling water was distinctly heard. She knew by these signs that they were nearing the outer edge of the wood—that is, of the thicker portion of it.

The light once more flickered through the leafy canopy, but it was fitful, for the flying clouds made it come and go like the flashes of the firefly. In one of these bright gleams they caught, in an open space before them, a sight that made their blood run cold and caused them both to cry aloud.

It was a dark figure, indistinctly seen—a white face

with gleaming eyes—and a snowy hand raised in the air as if beckoning them onwards.

A cloud passed over the moon, and the spectro disappeared like a vision seen by lightning.

"Oh, for the love of Heaven, Lady Eva, let us get back!" exclaimed Theresa, nearly sinking with terror. "It is the Lady of the Glen. They say she is never seen but an O'Connor dies!"

But the sight that sent fear to the heart of the maid seemed to endow the princess with new energy, and she dragged her trembling companion onward.

"You rave, child!" she said. "It is some sister returning from her work of mercy at the cottages. See where the moon shines on the convent bellry. Below that lies the Fairy's Well. Haste, we will overtake her and ask her company."

They soon arrived at a comparatively open space, giving a fitfully seen vista, with the bellry and roof of the convent above the trees on one slope.

The wind was sweeping briskly down the glen, and the fall and ripple of the mountain stream came to them in hollow murmurs, the rattling whisper of the trees had deepened to a dismal "sough," and instead of steam-like drifts of summer cloud large masses of storm-wrack scudded across the sky.

No form, human or ghostly, was in view, and the far-spread scene of silent desolation seemed still more frightful than the darkness they had left.

The sound of the harp floated wildly down upon the breeze, and they were hastening on toward it when they were terrified by a loud growling, and a couple of great, savage animals tore madly through the bushes and sprang toward them with fiery eyes and glistening fangs.

With one agonized cry to Heaven for mercy, princess and maid threw their arms about each other and awaited death.

But, as if their cry for mercy had been answered, they heard a crashing of branches and a voice of thunder crying:

"Wo! he! Back, Wolf-fang! Down, Sango!"

The animals crouched before their intended prey with a growl, and the terrified girls could see their red, lolling tongues and their hot breath condensing on the chilly air.

The next instant a man of wild appearance and herculean form, barbed and armed with a massive club, rushed from the wood.

He sprang at the dogs with a growl as savage as their own and sent them howling right and left, then, bowing reverentially to the women, he said, in a rough voice:

"Fear not, holy sisters, not a flock of froth shall stain your robes. I'll see you to Our Lady's House. I wonder me they let you come from castle or cot alone at such an hour. Wild beasts have no knowledge of holy persons, and the bloodhounds are only used to seeing hedge-bowmen and game thieves. Shall we go?"

He had, evidently, from their hoods and cloaks, mistaken them for nuns from the convent, returning from attending to the wounded of the battle-field. The girls had stood still in their stammering attitude of affright, but Theresa, recovering breath and voice, cried, in joyous tones:

"Heaven be praised, my Lady Eva, it is the king's forester, Black Murtaugh!"

At the sound of the name of the princess the man gave a start and cast himself on his knees, with his head bent at her feet and the hem of her cannabhas pressed to his lips.

"The forester?" she said.

"Yes, pardon me, my princess," he said, humbly.

"Who was to know it was the O'Connor's child here in the glen at midnight?"

"Ere, forever," she said, throwing back her hood. He arose and stood before her, gazing on her fair face with an expression of adoration on his wild features.

"I can trust you, forester?"

"Princess, you can still death—ay, and beyond it!" he answered, in a thrilling voice. "Not every child, my lady, can have the honour to be plucked from death by royal hands, but mine had that! Since then my soul is thine!"

The Princess Eva had plucked his drowning infant from the lake.

"Hush! that is sinful," she said, and Black Murtaugh dropped his head at the rebuke. "Listen, Theresa, there's the harp again! Forester, we go to the Fairy's Well. Wilt thou follow us?"

The man gave a frightened start, gazed at her, passed for an instant, and said:

"To death, my lady!"

They went on again, and the forester followed, with the great bloodhounds slinking slyly at his heels. At the edge of a dark grove, above which glimmered the windows of Our Lady's House, Eva O'Connor paused, and said:

"You, forester, stay here. Do not approach unless you hear us call."





[PAUL FOSS RETURNS FROM THE MARKET.]

## THE SECRET OF SCHWARZENBURG.

### CHAPTER III.

This secret is so weighty 'twill require  
A strong faith to conceal it. *Henry VIII.*

THERE is another island towards which the diverging lines of our story lead us. It is very little in appearance like the beautiful gem which the deep rolling Danube bore upon its bosom in royal pride, merely a long, narrow, rocky strip of land lying parallel with a bleak, sterile coast, against which the unobstructed waves from an ocean-wide travel came thundering and shattering in white lines of surf.

One can see none of that luxuriant verdure or the velvety turf that Aubrey Dalberg had admired so much at Schwarzenburg. There were either sharp, precipitous ledges of slate or broad, white lines of sand at the base. A few stunted plants with a chilly-looking blue blossom crept into the interstices of the higher rocks wherever a bit of warm earth had lodged, but the whole aspect was bleak and bare, only enticing upon a garish July or August day, when the salt air and the cool sea breeze are more welcome than the deepest woodland shade or the fairest bower of blossoming.

However, the island had its habitations, six of them, strung along the rough, tortuous road that led over the one smooth strip of beach, and wound up the hill to the single pretentious building—the latter, indeed, only in the matter of comparison, for the other buildings were such humble, indifferent affairs that an ordinarily comfortable mansion looked quite grand beside them.

Four of these latter were fishermen's cabins; one belonged to a queer fellow, a singular compound of surliness and good humour, called by some Nat the Hermit, and by others Mr. Nathaniel the Taxidermist, by which two characters he was solely known on the island and upon the neighbouring shore.

Nat lived entirely alone and performed the various duties of housekeeper apparently to his own satisfaction, for no one else was ever called in to his assistance.

That the man was neat-fingered and dextrous people had ample proof who obtained a peep into his cabinet, where a miniature grove supported the life-like forms of many of the beautiful winged creatures which came with the summer visitors, but which, if they were rare specimens, seldom escaped Nat's unerring rifle or obtained opportunity to depart.

Nat's home was supposed to be upon the island, but there were weeks and weeks when his cheery

cabin window had its green paper curtain down and when his door was locked against every visitor.

The neighbours would only shrug their shoulders and say, "Nat's off again on tramp," and, because the thing was so frequent an occurrence, they forbore to be curious in the matter.

But we are lingering at the taxidermist's cabin and neglecting the great house on the hill, which no one of the humble inhabitants of the place would think of doing, for, however careless they may be with regard to Nat's comings and goings, no member of the Foss family stirs an inch without being followed by curious glances and numberless queries.

The house is a large, rambling affair, originally built by a rich merchant, who took the notion to enjoy the advantage without the discomfort and crowd of a fashionable watering-place.

So the building was perched upon the highest ground, with long piazzas fronting the sea, and with wide doors that could be set open so that the keen salt air should circulate in every room.

The merchant had spent but two seasons at the house, and then had tired of the place, and it had stood tenantless, except for a few weeks in the warmest weather, year by year, until a queer, foreign-looking man had come over to the island, seen the empty building, and, making inquiries, found out that the place was for sale.

A week from that day the fishermen and their wives were electrified by the information that "Rock House," as it was called, had been sold. Be sure there was inattention to nets and housework when the boatloads of furniture arrived and were carted up to the mansion.

But the most intense interest concentrated on the boat that finally brought a group of half a dozen people to take possession.

There were two men and three women, tall, thin, dark-haired, all of them, and with a marked family likeness, so that for a long time the people below could not tell when they were speaking to Mr. Paul or to Urbannus Foss, nor be sure whether it was Theodosia or Rhoda or Penelope, when they saw the tall, straight figure of a woman emerge sedately from Rock House and take the path down to the landing.

There was a great deal of speculation and gossiping concerning the Foss family, but the little information obtained, during the first year of their residence among them, was the extent of the islanders' knowledge at the end of the ten years, which still found them in possession of the Rock House, evidently established there for life.

They were of foreign origin; that any one of ordinary sagacity could see at once. Their look and way and dress each had its own quaint peculiarity. Their nationality had not puzzled people either, for

all had unanimously pronounced them French, which was confirmed when old Ben White came hobbling away from his first long talk with Mr. Urbannus Foss—the eldest of the family and the most communicative by far.

"French, of course; I told you so," said Ben. "He's told me a lot about Paris. By jingo! it made me wish I'd been a merchant sailor, instead of a poor fisherman, to hear him tell about it. I s'pose I might ha' seen all the fine foreign places if I'd been a mind."

"That's no news! if it's all you've found out, it's no great good you've got out of your long talk," quoth Martha, his wife.

"Maybe it ain't; you women folk want to jerk in the line at the first bite. Now which were the two you called the men's wives? Which were the two Mrs. Fosses?" asked Ben, with a sly twinkle in his eye, which Martha noted, and governed herself accordingly, naming the two she had hitherto doubted, and leaving out altogether the one she had been so positive was the mistress of the house.

Ben laughed out in due enjoyment of having caught one who was usually a little ahead of him.

"No, marm; guess again, Martha; you know you're good at guessing."

"Of course it's the one that's left, the tallest woman, the one whose eyes snap so," returned his wife, somewhat crestfallen.

Upon which Ben laughed again, longer and louder than before.

"Ho, ho! ha, ha! Well, now, Marthy, as you're a living woman, there ain't a married one among 'em. They're just brothers and sisters, and if that ain't an odd family—five of 'em, and nary one married!"

"But there's a child—the girl," ejaculated the astonished woman.

"Yes, but she's nary bit a relation. It's a girl they've adopted, I expect."

"Do tell! well now, that beats all. They're queer folks, ain't they?"

And queer folks they remain still, after the ten years' residence. Fraternizing very little with outsiders, they had yet obtained a sort of hold upon the affections of the simple people among whom they had come, while commanding also a hearty respect and a rather vague awe.

We are going with Mr. Paul Foss to take our first look at the Rock House. That gentleman has just landed after a visit to the town, and he brings a light basket of groceries on his arm, which he hands promptly to the thin, angular woman who opens the rear door for him, and glances quickly, with those sharp black eyes of hers, over his person, and almost

immediately pounces upon a broad streak of dust upon the skirt of his coat.

"There, Paul, you must let me brush you! Don't come a step farther. I do wish those shopkeepers would try to be a little decent. You've been sitting down on some of their dusty benches, and there's two or three spots. I've no doubt they're oil. Do take off the coat, Paul, and let me clean it," cried she, in a shrill, high-toned voice, as if speaking to a deaf person, and running off the words so swiftly that a stranger could hardly have followed her.

This was Theodosia, the eldest of the three Misses Foss.

She was known on the island from the others, after a year's residence, by her straight, erect figure, and by the way she carried her head, with her little, sharp nose turned up to the air as if scenting out some impurity somewhere. Besides, her eyes were smaller and blacker, her hair grayer and scantier, if possible, than Miss Rhoda's, although all three wore the same sort of little wisened knot pinned up behind with a monstrous shell comb that looked as incongruous as a giant's helmet upon a baby's head.

Paul mockingly resigned his coat, and went back to scrape his feet a second time.

By this time the sound of their voices had brought a pair of eyes to every door in the room, and there were four of the latter.

Two other Misses Foss appeared, very like the eldest, with the same thin, spare form, and in just such an immaculate print dress, with the very same style of wide muslin collar, snowy white, and pinned with exactness by a square, old-fashioned breastpin containing a twisted bow of gray hair.

Closer scrutiny showed you that Rhoda entirely lacked Theodosia's energetic, commanding way, that she had a little nervous affection of the facial muscles, and a timid, frolicsome smile with which she turned helplessly to her sister at the slightest difficulty.

Penelope, the youngest of the family, while she possessed the same features and general air, had yet a marked personality of her own. She had evidently been more comely than the others; her complexion was still fairer, her eyes larger, and it seemed deeper, for when you looked into them, which, to be sure, few people had ever done, you read there a startling suggestion. She was not a woman like the others, her whole thought did not spend itself on the little details of housekeeping or the perpetual battle against dust and wear and tear. Somewhere, down deep in her soul, this Penelope had another world, whether the true woman retired to dream, in agony or ecstasy—who but herself could tell which? She was quiet in the house, talking far less than Rhoda, but yet, in her way, resisting Theodosia's autocratic ways.

Penelope and Paul were the closest friends of the household, although it was a little remarkable, for Paul was as tyrannical and authoritative in his way as Theodosia, with whom, from her very childhood, Penelope had seemed to clash.

Urbanus, the second son, was very like Rhoda, except that he had more assurance. He was a kind-hearted, genial man, and, as we have hinted before, it was he who mixed most with the fishermen, and loved to linger over his foreign stories.

Urbanus had come to the side door, his spectacles pushed up upon his forehead.

"Ah, yes; so you've come home again, Paul? I hope you didn't forget those screws I wanted?" he said, blandly.

Paul put his hand in his pocket, but at that moment a rich, clear voice called from the farther door, that which opened into the parlour, and thither every eye turned promptly.

A fair young girl stood there, looking fairer and sweeter and fresher for the contrast of her surroundings, as a rose has ten-fold loveliness blossoming out of a hedge of thorns, and startling one with the sweet surprise.

"Uncle Paul, do tell me quickly if the paper has come! I am so impatient for it. I hope you will not tease me by delay, Uncle Paul."

The winsome blue eyes smiled anxiously upon him, but Mr. Paul's manner held more than affection or admiration, a nameless air of deference, and he bowed as the old cavaliers used to bend before their sovereign princess.

And straightway he produced a neatly tied roll from his inner pocket, pulling out also as he did so and dropping to the floor a large foreign-looking letter, the envelope bluish-gray, with a row of stamps across the top.

"Yes, Miss Leina, I have brought it."

The blithe young fairy danced across the floor, took it, and kissed the tips of the fingers which gave it with an airy grace that was inborn, and then flew away, and was the next instant ensconced among the pile of white cushions in the great chair that was wheeled into the bay window which looked out upon the sea from the front chamber.

The group left behind stared from each other to the foreign-looking letter, which still lay upon the floor.

Theodosia was the first to speak. She dropped the brush and comb—actually dropped them both

without a thought of putting either in its proper place.

"Another letter, Paul!" exclaimed she, in her high, incisive voice; "and there is no remittance due yet. Then it must be something extraordinary. Have you read it?"

"No, Theodosia. Is it likely I would read it before I brought it before you all? Come, let us go together and break the seal. Are you ready, Urban?"

"Certainly; just let me get my other glasses—these are the far-sighted ones," responded Urbanus, darting back into the work-room, where he had been employed at a tool-bench.

Theodosia took off her apron, folded it and laid it on the table. She stooped also to pick up the fallen coat and brush, then carefully shook out the folds of her skirt, lest by any chance a stray atom of dust had lodged there, and should be carried into the grand room of the house. Rhoda had been standing still, pulling helplessly at the ribbons of her black silk apron. She looked over to Theodosia inquiringly, started and shook her own dress, and then quietly followed the elder sister's lead, and moved on toward the little room where all the solemn consultations of the family were held, with the outside show of impartial dismission at least, although Theodosia and Paul usually settled everything.

Penelope did not follow the others at once. She stood leaning against the wall, her hands clasped behind her, her eyes fixed upon the latter. The lowered lids hid from her brothers the wild terror, the fierce anguish which these eyes betrayed. When Paul picked up the letter she gave one deep, convulsive shudder, then turned slowly round and followed behind Urbanus.

Theodosia took up the green cashmere curtain of the solitary window of the library, a tiny room holding a centre table, a tall bookcase with glass doors, five high-back chairs, and a picture hanging under a green curtain.

Miss Theodosia had already taken her seat, and with a becomingly grave face awaited her brother's motions.

Rhoda stood with her back to the back of her, flustered and restless, as if upon any event out of the common routine.

When the others entered she sat down, and then started up again, and finally settled herself, working off her agitation by plaiting and unplaiting her fingers in the folds of her dress.

Penelope, on the contrary, though her very heart seemed bursting beneath the mighty throbb which also choked her breath, dropped down into her seat and, turning her face to the window, never afterward moved an inch.

Paul took up the letter, carefully inserted a paper knife under the seal, moving with tantalizing slowness as he separated it from the paper intact, and laid the stamped wax carefully on one side.

Then he spread open the paper, smoothed it out, and read aloud:

"June 20.

"Danger menaces your charge. Let there be strict seclusion and constant watchfulness. These are the strict commands of one high in authority. Be cautious in all respects. Only a few months longer and you will be relieved of the anxiety and care. Remember, positively strict seclusion."

There was neither signature nor address to the letter, but that seemed no matter of surprise to the Foss family.

"Danger!" ejaculated Rhoda, lifting up both hands. "Oh, Theodosia, what can it be? What does his lord—"

"Hush! hush! Rhoda! you will always be such an imprudent child!" exclaimed Theodosia, shaking her long finger in Rhoda's face. "If there is danger the very walls cannot be trusted. Why can't you say 'he'—we all understand whom you mean?"

Urbanus reached over and took the letter, and read it through carefully.

He passed it on to Theodosia, who put on her spectacles and likewise looked it over.

"There can be no mistake about the writing," said she, holding it in turn to Rhoda.

Rhoda was still frightened; she shivered as she glanced at the letter, and dropped it into Penelope's lap as if it had burned her. The latter took it up, her cold fingers closing over the paper with a fierce grasp. For a little time it lay in her lap, and she sat staring down at it. Then suddenly she looked up, and cried out, sharply:

"In a few months! must she leave us in a few months? Oh, that is cruel, cruel!"

"I am trying to think," said Paul, "what danger there can be. It has not certainly come from any indiscretion of ours. We have never had a stranger within our walls, nor allowed even a servant in the house to spy upon us."

"It is not likely. If the danger was near us we should have received warning of it," returned Theodosia, in her decided fashion. "Something has probably leaked out there. It may be some one is coming to search."

"Good heavens! if that terrible man himself should come," cried out Rhoda, starting up in a panic at the bare suggestion.

"Rhoda!" exclaimed Theodosia, severely, "you always were a simpleton. How is he going to find us in this retired spot? You know we have none of us ever strayed half a dozen miles away from it. Besides, is he not a prisoner, watched and guarded on every side? Do try to make less absurd speeches. I think, Paul, we must deny her the walks now, although she has enjoyed them so much."

"Of course we must; that is settled. And you, Urbanus, must keep close watch of all approach to the island. Even if everything were discovered it would be a struggle and not force that we should be called to meet. It would be very trying indeed if, after three long years of faithful devotion to the cause, a few months should defeat the whole."

"It shall not be defeated!" quoth Theodosia, with flashing eyes. "Is not our very honour bound up in its success? Was it not a proud and honourable duty that was given to our keeping? and will it not be our crown of glory when it is fulfilled?"

Penelope still sat with drooping head and lowered eyelids. Half-unaware that her thoughts were taking shape, she murmured:

"And when it is fulfilled we shall have lost Leina—"

"—as we shall have lost Leina from our midst."

"That is impossible!" retorted Theodosia. "You will all become witnesses how often I have reproved Penelope for forgetting who Leina really is. I warned you against setting your affections upon her as you might have done with an ordinary child. Again and again I have warned you. Don't blame me if you never hear from it now."

"I don't blame you, Theodosia," returned Penelope, huskily. "I do not know as you could help me if you had the will. The child has crept very closely into my heart, and I cannot let her go without a pang."

"Of course that is natural. I love her myself, but I have constantly schooled myself to be prepared for a separation. To be sure we did not expect it for three years longer, yet what real difference does it make, since the trial finally comes?"

"Three years! ah, three years seem so long beside a few months," answered Penelope. "They are long enough, perhaps—who knows—for me to die in," she added, under her breath.

"It will be a dreary place here without her bright face," said Urbanus, sadly. "We shouldn't stay here."

"Ay, you needn't be too hard on Penelope, Theodosia; your heart is not so tender as hers, nor mine either, but it gives me a sharp twinge to think of losing her," added Paul.

"Think of our father's dying injunction. Think of having faithfully fulfilled this trust he and our noble patron gave to us," retorted Theodosia, warming up at this opposition. "Besides, does not she go to a grand and enviable station, and cannot you love her there? What foolish, sentimentality. I long to enjoy her astonishment and delight when she knows it all. I am glad the time is shorter than we expected."

Penelope did not say any more. She sat there very still and silent, looking out of the window. She turned around slowly, however, when she heard the click of the sliding brass rings, as Theodosia's firm hand swept away the green curtain from the single picture upon the wall.

The others all rose and stood before the charming, life-like picture in a silent, motionless group. A proud, triumphant smile was on Theodosia's face, and Paul's eyes reflected it. Urbanus's lips kept a tender gravity, and Rhoda put her handkerchief to her face and fell to weeping silently. But Penelope, with grim-set lips and ahy face, sat there by the window and shuddered. And the picture showed the sunny isle and the proud old towers of St. Marysbury Heights.

"How I long to show and disclose all to her," repeated Theodosia, exultantly, as she dropped the curtain again.

(To be continued.)

**HEN MARTIN'S VISIT TO DUNROBIN.**—At a dinner given recently at Golepie, in connection with the annual Hife Volunteer competition, the Duke of Sutherland read a letter he had received from Her Majesty, in her own handwriting, in which she expressed the great pleasure which her visit to Dunrobin had afforded her, observing also that it had been the happiest period of her life since her bereavement. The reading of the letter was received with loud cheers.

**COWPER'S LAST RESIDENCE.**—The house at East Dereham, Norfolk, in which Cowper spent the last three and a half years of his life is about to be pulled down, and a Congregational chapel built on the site. The house has already been bought (excepting a small portion sold separately to a purchaser), and plans have been prepared for a "neat Gothic structure," which is to be called the "Cowper Congregational



Church." The writer appeals to "Intelligent Non-conformists through the country, much more than to Churchmen, to expostulate with the Derham Independents, to point out to them their mistake in valuing the name of Cowper into an advertising machine, and then to aid in the creation of a fund which may make it worth the Independents' while to turn their thoughts elsewhere."

## GLIMPSSES OF SOCIETY.

### CHAPTER I.

THE chill wind of a December evening drove a drift of hail-like snow against the window panes, while Anna Zane stood and watched for the coming of her young husband in the pleasant home which had been her father's bridal gift. Her husband was only a clerk in that father's mercantile house, unable when he won her love and asked for her hand to own a home, and expected, if the boon he asked were granted, to have to go into apartments, or at best to rent a small dwelling, for he knew that Mr. Ewart Everts, her father, was a cautious man in all financial outlays, and he expected no dowry with his bride, if indeed he got her at all. He was surprised then when, on his wedding-day, the title deed of the house with all its new, well-chosen furniture was placed in his hands, and he was profuse in his grateful pledges to be worthy of her and the kindness of her father.

She was an only and a petted child, the idol of a father whose love was all centred on her when her mother passed away, and he had but one question to propound when his consent to the union was asked: "Will it make my child happy?"

Edward Zane, an orphan, had been reared in his counting-house, and had won his good opinion by his uniform attention to business, his faithfulness to duty, and his apparently excellent habits.

But enough of explanation. The story will weave its own web fast enough.

"What can keep Edward so late?" said the young wife, in nervous solicitude. "He should have been here two hours ago. Mary is fretting because the juices of the meat are drying out while she keeps it warm, and the potatoes, which she delights to see so perfect, are spoiling," she says. Ah—a ring at the door-bell! It is not he, for he carries a latch-key."

An instant later a young-looking gentleman, from whose garb it was easy to tell that he was a clergyman, entered, leading a child, lovely even in its rage—for it was miserably dressed—a female child of not over six years, if indeed so old.

"My good Mrs. Zane, will you do me a great favour?" cried this gentleman, without even pausing to pass the usual salutations of an acquaintance.

"Certainly, Mr. Talmage—as my father's dearest friend and as our pastor, your wishes will always meet my prompt attention."

"It is this. Please take care of this poor little wail on poverty's icy river till morning. I found her weeping in the street just now. She had lost her way, and when asking a policeman to show her where her grandparents lived he brutally threatened to take her to the station-house as a vagrant. I am to lecture in Croydon this evening, and shall be late for the train as it is I fear. So I have no time to seek her home for her to-night, but I will in the morning, if you will kindly keep her till then."

"I will most cheerfully, Mr. Talmage. How good of you to bring the poor thing here."

"Not goodness—only duty, my dear lady. Now good-bye, little one, till morning. This good lady will feed you and keep you warm, and I will come to help you to find your home, and to brighten it maybe."

The gentleman was gone the next second, for he had just time to catch the train to reach his appointment.

The lady took the hand of the little girl, and while she pressed back the brown, curly hair from her white forehead she said, gently:

"What is your name, little pet?"

"Nellie, ma'am—least that's what grandpa and grandma call me. But the man we rent our room of, when he gets me to go on errands sometimes, calls me Nell. I work so hard. I pray for rain every night, so it will be muddy and I can sweep the crossing. When the policeman don't drive me off I get a whole handful of pennies, because I keep where I sweep so clean it will never spoil the shine of anybody's shoes."

"Poor thing! You are too young to work!"

"Oh, no, ma'am! If I don't work we couldn't pay the rent, two shillings a week it is; and grandpa and grandma must eat. They're old and weak. Grandpa used to make toys, and grandma knit stockings, but they are very old, and they can hardly see now."

"Poor people! When Mr. Talmage finds where they live I will go and see them, and help them all I can."

"Oh, no, ma'am—'twouldn't do for a lady to come where I live. There are bad people there who would rob you, and maybe kill you for the nice clothes you wear, or the rings on your fingers—wicked, wicked people. They drink gin and they swear till I feel cold all over to hear them."

A heavy step at the door interrupted this conversation, and the next instant a young man of fine figure, expressive face and manly looks hurried in.

"My dear husband—my own Edward!" cried the lady as she sprang to her feet and met him with a loving kiss. "Why are you so late? Dinner has been waiting over two hours."

"Anna, my darling, when you hear the news I have to tell you will not chide for my delay. But what mischief is this you have here?" he added, in an angry tone.

"Oh, Edward, do not speak so harshly!"

"Oh, ma'am, I'm used to being spoken cross to. Don't scold the nice gentleman for that," said the child, earnestly. "If I only knew where to find grandpa I wouldn't stay here. I know I'm not nice enough for such a grand house."

"You are, my poor darling, you are!" said Mrs. Zane, tenderly. "When my husband knows that Mr. Talmage brought you here, and asked me to keep you till morning, so that he could help you find your home, he will not speak unkindly to you."

"No, no—that Talmage is always doing something of the kind. But I ought not to be unkind even to a dog just now. I told you, my little wife, I had news! Such news! You would not guess it in a lifetime!"

"Then please save me a lifetime of bother by telling me!" said the young wife, with a smile. "You must be quick, for Mary is putting the dinner on the table. Hear the dishes clatter! She is out of patience, for her potatoes are spoiled."

"Well, darling, make one guess!"

"I am not good at guessing. But to please you I will try. Father has promoted you to a better clerkship—head book-keeper, perhaps?"

"Ha! ha! A clerkship indeed! And the young man laughed scornfully. "Promoted! Why, if there's any promoting to do, I think I'll promote him!"

"Edward, what is the matter? Surely you have not been drinking!"

"Well, no—not much, though I did have to crack one bottle of wine with Count Velechinski, to whom I told the news, darling. I'm a millionaire!"

"A millionaire, Edward? Surely you are crazy, or the wine you drank with that unprincipled adventurer has made you wild!"

"Unprincipled adventurer?" cried the young husband, angrily. "Anna, you must never speak of a friend of mine in that way!"

"That Velechinski is no friend of yours, Edward. Father says he is an adventurer without honour or character, I could tell you more, but I do not wish you to get into trouble with him, as you would if you knew what I could tell you! Do not quarrel with me on his account!"

Tears filled her eyes as she spoke.

The hot flush faded from his cheek and brow as he saw the tears, and he spoke more gently.

"Forgive me, Anna—I was wrong to speak harshly to you. But my good luck has turned my brain, I do believe. I will tell you of it. My uncle in California, of whom you have heard me speak as the richest man on the Pacific Coast, died last month, leaving me all his property by will. In lands, mines, stock and money it amounts to at least four million pounds, so the lawyers write who have his property in charge, and they have remitted me a large draft to enable me to close all business I may be in here, and to go on and take possession. Isn't this good news?"

"I don't know, Edward! We were very happy and comfortable before. You had a large salary, your own house, and only worked from ten o'clock in the morning to four in the afternoon!"

"Salary and work. Never speak of such things again to me. As the count says the very names are vulgar, and they shock me!"

"Does father know of this?" asked Anna.

"Yes, he was in the counting-house when I got the letter and opened it. I was so astonished I hardly knew what I was doing, and I believe I gave three cheers even then!"

"Oh, Edward, did it not grieve you to hear of the death of your uncle?"

"It would if he hadn't made me his heir. As it is I think he died just at the right time."

"Oh, Edward, I never heard you speak so lightly before, it seems so wrong."

"There, there! Don't begin preaching, dear. But hark—the dinner bell is ringing, and I'm as hungry as I need to be when I was poor."

Laughing, the young husband led the way to the dining-room, whither his wife followed, leading little Nellie by the hand.

"Please, ma'am, don't ask me to eat at the table, he won't like it," said the girl, trembling. "I'd rather have a piece of bread in my hand and go where he can't look so cross at me."

The tender heart of the lady was touched, but she knew the child could not eat where cold looks would chill her appetite and terrify her heart, so she said to the servant:

"You need not wait table to-day, Mary. Take this little one down into the kitchen and give her a nice warm supper."

"I will, mum, for I was a child once myself, without much to warm the heart in me."

She led little Nellie away while Edward Zane was carving the meat and grumbling that it was dry and hard.

Anna made no reply.

A sad sensation made her heart beat heavily, and she felt that the sky of her wedded life was all at once overcast with a cloud she had not even dreamed of till it came.

Seeming completely oblivious of her presence, not even observing that she did not—in truth, could not—eat, Zane hurried through his own dinner, and, without waiting for dessert, rose from the table.

"Surely you are not going out this evening, Edward?" his wife asked as she saw him return to the dining-room with his hat on.

"I rarely am!" he answered, curtly. "A millionaire has some privileges, has he not, even if he is married? I join the Count Velechinski's club to-night!"

"Oh, Edward!"

It was all she said as he turned on his heel and strode away; but the tears trickling down her cheeks spoke more than words could say.

Mary came up, wondering so little had been eaten and her niece's dessert was untouched, but when she saw her mistress had been weeping she deemed to know that there was a cloud where she had seen sunshine always before, and, with unusually respectful tone, she turned away without saying anything which might add to the sorrow of a heart that had never been kind to her.

"Did the little girl eat her supper, Mary?" asked her mistress, in a kindly tone.

"Yes, she did, ma'am; but first she said a little prayer. I never see the like in a wee little thing like her."

"She is a good child, Mary, and has been brought up, poor as she is, to thank Heaven for his blessings. Were we all as good there might not be so many shadows in our paths. Bring her to me in the sitting-room. I will try and alter a dress for her, for it may be late before Mr. Zane comes home."

"Shall I sit up with you, ma'am, till he comes?"

"You need not mind me, Mary. I shall make up a bed on the sofa for the child, and I will keep awake with my work."

So Mary went after the little one, and Mrs. Zane went to the sitting-room to put up a dress of her own and make it up for the child.

The little one was soon with her, and Mrs. Zane, while measuring her for her dress, drew from her all the story she had to tell.

It was not much, only such as thousands in our own great city can tell.

She never had known the loving care of her mother. She didn't believe she ever had a father, because she never heard her grandparents talk of him, though they often spoke of and wept about her mother.

They said her mother was not dead, but she had gone and left her a baby, in their care, and now they did not know with certainty where she was.

Twice since Nellie had been able to go about they had seen her, dressed very grandly, in a splendid carriage, but she did not, or would not, know them, though the carriage almost ran over them while they called out her name.

It happened that Nellie and her grandparents had hard work to keep alive, for the rent took nearly all the money she could get, and they never ate meat—only bread and sometimes a little soup when she could get a bundle of wood to cook it with. Three-pence would buy bones and scraps at the butcher's stall, and "it would last so long," the poor child said.

While Anna was thus working and talking her father came in.

"Edward not here?" he asked as soon as he entered. "I hoped to find him sobered down a little so that I could talk to him."

"He has gone out to join a club," said Anna, sadly.

"A club? What club?"

"I don't know what kind of a club, father—I only know that the vile man who insulted me, Count Velechinski, is at the head of it!"

"Then it is a gambling club. Edward must be crazy! This must be stopped, or he will soon be as characterless as the usual you spoke of. It is a plan

eyes were opened, but for a few seconds only, as it appeared, on a dark and well nigh too confused and obscure a scene for mortal vision to discern its constituent parts.

As his eyes grew accustomed to the dim light and recovered from their recent pressure he began to distinguish by degrees the objects around.

At the end of the large, arched apartment, which was gloomily hung round with black, was a kind of raised dais, with a table and pedestal draped in the same sombre hue, and on the other side of this raised tribunal, as it evidently was intended to be, sat some three men, all wearing the same long disguising cloaks and with the same mysterious signs and hieroglyphics on the drapery. They were also a thin disguising covering to their faces, through the openings of which the dark, glittering orbs and red lips appeared in a strange relief, though without giving the slightest clue to their identity.

Juan felt his blood chill at the sight of the dark physiognomies of men upon whom he instinctively felt his very life might depend. But he had sworn to himself not to betray the slightest sign of emotion or alarm, and he calmly awaited the next scene in the drama.

He had not long to wait. One of the men, whom he guessed to be the principal, spoke in a solemn, somewhat hoarse voice:

"Young man, what is your name—I mean that by which you have hitherto been called?"

Juan calmly gave his accustomed appellation.

"Then we are to understand that all you may say or undertake under that name would be considered as binding upon you, since you are not at present known by any other—is it so?" pursued the voice.

"Certainly. I am not in the habit of denying my words or actions when I am conscious that I have committed them," returned Juan, proudly.

"It is well," was the reply. "Brothers," continued the same speaker, "you may proceed to the usual business we admit any neophyte to the fraternity."

The men left the side of their apparent superior and walked up to Juan.

"Young man," they said, "you are about to undergo the ordeals of fire, earth, and water, and if you endure them as a man and a brother worthy of the great and holy society and fraternity should, then you will be admitted to the oaths, the privileges, and the responsibilities of the order. Are you prepared?"

"I am," was the firm reply, though Juan's heart well nigh stopped its beating at the dark and ominous words.

The men left him for a moment, and the one who had accompanied Harold Farino to the apartment where Juan had lain so long alone and helpless proceeded to draw off his outer garments and leave his arm stripped and bare to the very shoulder.

Scarcely had the operation been completed than the others returned, bearing a red-hot iron, which, without a moment's delay, was laid on the bare and sensitive arm close to the shoulder.

It was agonising pain, was that branding process, as a Maltese cross was heavily fixed on his flesh; but he neither flinched nor groaned as it went on, and a sort of grim smile of satisfaction could be distinguished through the disguising crape that covered the features of the tormentors.

"It is well," they said. "If you are equally firm in your other ordeals you will not have long to wait ere you enter on your new duties and honours."

They drew the sleeve over the tortured arm, and, placing the bandage again over the eye, they led him from the spot where he stood through a long and narrow passage, to judge from the time it consumed and the close feeling of the walls near them.

"Now," said the man, "once more your courage will be tried, young man. Steel your nerves and you will not repent the endurance."

They unveiled his eyes as they spoke, and Juan did indeed feel that the caution was necessary at the scene which presented itself.

A coffin, draped and covered as if for the dead, stood ready for some occupant, and at its side was a yet more fearful accompaniment, in the shape of a yawning grave.

Juan shuddered in spite of himself.

"Who—what is this for?" he gasped, hoarsely.

"For you," said the man. "You must, ere you take the solemn vows expected of you, realise the torments and the punishments that await their breach. Know then, young man, that the torture you have just been subjected to is but a taste of that which would accrue from faithlessness, after which a long and lingering death would ensue that would give you a hundred times its bitterness ere your spirit left the body. Yes, you must enter this coffin and be lowered into that grave for a certain space; and, as you lie there in your solitude, figure to yourself the terror that would await you if you were really entombed there without hope of deliverance."

It was a terrible ordeal, one which almost seemed to threaten reason, if not life itself. But Juan knew, or at any rate guessed full well, that there would be

a yet more terrible alternative were he to attempt to draw back now from the path on which he had entered. He breathed to himself that one word which carried with it so magic a spell.

"Elgiva, Elgiva, it is for your dear sake, who endured so much for me," he murmured, inwardly. Then, with a firm if colourless face, and a step that did not visibly tremble, whatever its real quivering might be, he stepped into that living tomb, and in another instant he felt himself lowered into the yawning chasm that was prepared for him.

It was a dreadful sensation that thrilled through his frame, a deathly faintness to which he well nigh succumbed came over him. But he compressed his lips firmly, so that no sound should escape them, and the men proceeded in their task undisturbed by remonstrance or comment from their victim.

"Farewell," they said as they turned to leave the spot. "A tremendous stake is at issue. It is for you to deserve its high reward."

The steps and the voice died away.

Juan was alone. Would it be for ever? There were bustling voices in his ears and in his brain that whispered frightful, maddening fancies.

Would they leave him there to die? Was all this grim pagantry but a mocking invention of his uncle to repay with interest the contempt with which his daughter's love had been repaid? Was the death intended for him not to be under the denomination of actual murder, since he had himself consented to the ordeal?

It was a fearful prospect to lie there alone, unvisited, starving, and in darkness, till death came as a release.

Juan was young, and though he had said truly that life without Elgiva had few charms yet it was sad to yield it up so young and in so hideous a manner.

No wonder if his eyes swam and his brain was whirling for some time after his tormentors left him, no wonder that he at last lost consciousness in the fearful position which had been assigned to him.

How long he lay there he never knew, but when his senses again returned there was a sudden flashing of light, accompanied by the approach of steps, which proved he had not been altogether deserted.

It was some moments, however, ere the men arrived at the spot, and Juan had time to recover in a manner his self-possession and not to betray the intense horror that had overcome his spirit to such weakness.

Ere the dark figures again stood at the side of the vault his eyes had regained in some degree their steadiness of vision and his cheeks were not so utterly corpse-like as the light of hope brought some warmth to their cold surface.

"Are you there?" they questioned.

"Yes," he replied, with stern brevity, lost the voice should belie the brave steadiness of his spirit.

"It is well," they said. "There have been those who have lost reason if not life in the ordeal you have just gone through. However, as we told you, you shall not repeat your firmness if you complete your probation."

There seemed an age ere the cords were tightened and the terrible bed drawn up from the earth in which it had sunk.

At last Juan stepped from its recess and once again stood on the ground, firm and erect on his feet, with a sense of security that had never even occurred to him before.

"You have nearly completed your probation now," they said. "There is but one more proof—that of the water. You must endure for a few moments that trying torture that would be one of your punishments should you fail in your allegiance, then you must take the solemn oath that completes your novitiate."

Juan comprehended but too well their meaning. He had heard of the terrible punishment of that dropping water—slow, sure, even—on the head, which well nigh banished sense and reason from the sufferer. But it was not to be for long; it was but as a brief trial, a foretaste as it were of what should never occur, and he nerved himself to go through it as a brave man should.

In after days the young man could never think without a shudder of that fearful ordeal, which he only tasted for a brief space. He could scarcely imagine the full horror of that long, long, living torture of that drop, drop, drop on the agonised nerves, the fearful punctuality of its fall, the gradual fevering and maddening of the senses as time went on.

But it ceased with him at last. The cords that kept him under its influence were unloosed, and he was at length conducted back to the chamber from which he had come under the tangle of his gloomy guards.

Once more he stood in view of the three once again ranged in dark power behind the terrible tribunal, and the voice which had now lost some of its sternness sounded in his ears.

"Juan De Castro, welcome. You have endured the three trials with the bravery and firmness that should be the characteristics of a man who will keep his pledged word. Now it remains for you to take

the oath which finally admits you into our fraternity. But, remember, should you ever be tempted to break the vow then you will not, in any one room of the globe, be able to escape the personal and final infliction of those tortures and death of which you have had a foretaste. Bring hither the necessary forms," he said, turning to the man who had assisted to bring the young man from the prison cell.

They were a ghastly array, and the book that was brought and the oath that was dictated were awe-inspiring and fearfully thrilling and solemn.

But Juan scarcely comprehended the full meaning of the latter. His mind was well nigh wandering with all he had undergone, his brain reeling, and his heart faint beyond physical power to endure.

The words were repeated almost mechanically, the signature affixed to a paper that was given to him without the document having been even fully and clearly perused.

Then the men rose from the judgment-like seat, and, with a sign to Harold, who had remained a mute and solemn silence during the entire ceremony, they disappeared through some hidden opening.

Harold approached his nephew with a dreary smile, that scarcely seemed in keeping with his haggard features.

"Now," he said, "have Juan, noble descendant of a brave race, I can congratulate you as his worthy offspring. You have deserved your high destiny, and it is for you to assume the dignities, the wealth, and the happiness that you have fairly won. Come with me," he added, giving his hand to the exhausted young man with a half-respectful deference that had never before marked his conduct. "Come with me, and I will, at last, reveal to you the long-hidden mystery that has been wrapped in so thick a web-dependent omens, tangled and doubtful revelation. At length the crisis has come, and I can punish the guilty and raise the innocent to the honours and the rights of which they have been so long deprived."

## CHAPTER XXII.

"When thou, just entering on thy prime  
And woman's sense in thee combined  
Gently with child-like's simplest mind,  
First taughtst me thy sighing soul to move  
With hope towards the heaven of love."

The return of the season again found the fashionable world in London.

The first drawing-room had been held, and the operatic troupe completed in its full perfection and with its usual prestige.

Scarcely any of those who had been in the habit of frequenting the busy metropolis but had found their way to the usual haunts, and taken their places in the throng which filled the gay saloons, the public places, and the parks to the very pitch of excitement and gaiety.

Every day's journal contained the announcement of some new arrival in the world of fashion, and among the last of these paragraphs was the following:

"The Count Arnheim, Earl of Chetwode, and his daughter, the Lady Elgiva, arrived yesterday at their residence in Grosvenor Square. We regret to learn that the youthful heiress, who last year excited much enthusiasm in the beau monde, is in very delicate health."

Such was the paragraph that met the eyes of the fair girl to whom it referred on the morning after their arrival in the splendid but to her gloomy mansion in the metropolis.

A faint smile crossed her lips at the scant grains of truth that mingled with the pompous flourish of the announcement.

She was changed. There could be no doubt of that when the eyes rested on her softer and fairer bloom, on her less rounded cheeks, on the eyes whose flashing vivacity was now tempered with a melting sadness that was more touching if less dazzling than her former joyous brilliancy.

"Alas, alas!" she murmured as she threw down the paper which had been brought up with her coffee into the morning-room. "If it were only the health; but it is the heart, the brain, the spirit that are affected."

She had scarcely spoken the words when the door opened, and her father entered with a bundle of letters and cards in his hand.

"Here, Elgiva," he said, "I hope you are well enough to read and decide on all these civilities that have already been paid to us. See, there are about fifty cards that will have to be properly answered, and their invitations decided upon. I do not expect you to accept any but the most eligible, but at the same time I should not choose you to refuse all from the gay world, lest evil reports should be spread about the cause of the association."

He seated himself as he spoke and poured the ample contents of his card-dish on the table.

His daughter gazed at them with a careless indifference in her look and gesture that evidently irritated her father.

"Did you hear me, Lady Elgiva?" he said in a stern tone.



"Certainly, papa," she replied, quickly, "but I really care so little about any of these things that it is your wishes alone that I am ready to carry out as far as my strength will allow."

"Strength, my child?" he repeated, in a softer tone. "Elgiva, should one like you, in the first bloom of youth and beauty, speak of bodily health? It will be your own fault, my child, if your strength be not rather recovered by this change and variety. Elgiva, be advised, be rational, my love. If it were not for the wild fancies you have taken—which, thank Heaven, have been baulked, though not from any action of mine—you would have enjoyed all the brilliant health which is only the natural portion of your age and your race."

A flash of resentful pride crossed the girl's face.

"Father," she said, "let that be for ever at rest between us. I would fain observe the duty of a child, and not express what I yet cannot but feel of resentment and grief. I am sufficiently a true daughter of my race to know how to endure the suffering I have before me. Only do not push me too far, do not taunt me with what is no fault of mine, or I may perhaps be driven to my what would be very painful to me to remember in after days."

The count's eyes had somewhat drooped under the half-indignant, half-scornful flash of his daughter's gaze, and his next words were gentler and more deprecating.

"Well, Elgiva, I do not wish to be hard upon you, though you cannot but suppose that it has been very mortifying to me that my only child and heiress should injure her prospects and health and degrade her birth and family by an unworthy and absurd fancy. However, I will compromise the matter with you so far. I shall not insist on your mingling as entirely in the gaiety of the season as you might otherwise have done, but the choicest of the fêtes and entertainments I shall certainly desire you to accept, lest there should be any scandal in the world as to the cause of your seclusion. You will therefore be so good as to look over these cards and invitations with me, and we will then decide on those to be accepted and those declined on the score of your delicate health and, I may add, your betrothal to the Prince Charles."

"Which will never be fulfilled till I have some better satisfaction as to the fate of him who has saved my life," she returned, with the unnatural eagerness of manner that she had of late assumed. "Father, there is too terrible a mystery about his and Lena's disappearance for me to ever dream of giving my hand to any man who may have been guilty of such crime."

"Then I can only tell you that Prince Charles has both in your presence and in private made the most solemn avowement that he has no idea of the time or place or manner in which these two unfortunate vagrants disappeared," returned the count, earnestly. "Elgiva, whatever may be your prejudices, however you may choose to malign and to doubt your father's wisdom or his love, I can at least expect credence and confidence from you as to that transaction. Child," he continued, more sadly, "it is indeed a terrible punishment for my past sins, whatever they may have been, for my own, my only child to refuse her credence to me, her obedience in the most important matter of her life."

His voice trembled and eyes moistened as he spoke, and Elgiva's heart was touched in spite of herself at the unmistakable evidence of emotion.

She suddenly rose from her seat, and with a total change of manner cast herself in her father's arms.

"Father, father, forgive me. I would not willingly cost you one pang or bring one unpleasant memory to your heart," she said, pressing her lips to his quivering mouth. "But you would not desire to secure the misery of your only child or to be the victim of a bad, cruel man's perfidy. And if I remain firm in such resistance it may be that you will thank me one day for my apparent obstinacy. Now I am ready," she continued, in a lighter and more cheerful tone. "Let us dismiss this disagreeable subject till it is more pressed upon our decision. I need no deliberation to guide my conduct in the matter."

And, with a collected coolness that gave her an strange command over her father's more troubled and vacillating mood, she quickly began her task of inspecting the mass before her.

Some of the cards were cast carelessly aside without more than momentary consideration.

Others were placed for more deliberate choice, till she came to one that appeared to excite more surprise and attention.

"What have you there, my love?" asked the count as he perceived she paused in her examination.

"Only a note that is rather strangely worded," she said, still inspecting the billet. "It is from the Duchess of San Alva, with an especial request that I will take part in some private theatricals or characters, or something of the kind, in which the fair new debutante of the season—to use her own expression—will take part. Now, of course, we are in ignorance as to this stranger," she added, "and yet it appears from such emphasis being laid on her presence that there must be something extraordinary about her."

"My Elgiva is not jealous! I should imagine there can be little fear of any rival surpassing her."

The girl laughed half scornfully.

"I care little now, papa, for any such nonsense," she returned, "whatever might once have been the case. But I certainly shall decline," she added, musingly. "I have an especial objection to such exhibitions, except in the country and among those I know well."

The count was looking all the time at the handwriting, which was foreign in its small, crabbed style and the slight inaccuracies of its language.

"Elgiva, do you remember this duchess?" he asked, dreamily.

She thought for a moment ere she replied:

"I met so many strangers last year, papa, that I really have rather a confused recollection of several I saw during the season. Still I do remember the name, and I think we had cards left and an invitation which we could not accept, so that—if I am not mistaken—we never met at all."

The count mused with a troubled air.

"Surely," he muttered, "surely it cannot be the same! No, no; it was but a wild fancy. She must have been dead long since—not now in the gay world. I am an idiot to date all from that. Perhaps it may be the daughter-in-law, or even relative of some one I once knew by that name. Elgiva," he resumed, in a tender voice, "in any case I think you had better not decline her kindness. You can surely waive your scruples for a few hours and accept the chance of shining, as you should, before the gay world by the side of this debutante. Elgiva, it is my pleasure that you should go," he repeated, with inexplicable sternness.

The girl hesitated.

"If you will it I shall certainly go, papa," she said, "but not as a sharer in the theatricals; I shall go if you wish to the party, though I should much prefer staying away."

"And be lost in the throng," he said, angrily, "when others are shining in the full sun. No, it shall not be, Elgiva, my child. If you have any love, any remaining sense of obedience to me, then you will obey me in this. Child, you would sacrifice far more for a stranger, a vagrant—surely you can yield so much to a father."

It was certainly a somewhat irresistible appeal, and the girl's eyes were cast down as she mused over the circumstances and her own duty.

Yet she shrank from the exertion thus required of her while her dearest affections and hopes were in the balance.

Should she not violate the sacredness of her love and the memory of him who had suffered so much for her by entering into such gaudy gaieties?

Still Elgiva had a fund of practical firmness and sense that was perhaps not usual with one so young and brought up in the very warmth of encircling luxury and tenderness.

"Father," she said, "will you tell me just one thing, and I promise not to pry into your secrets farther than it may suit you to confide them to me. Is there any deeper motive than mere capricious jealousy for my supposed rival that induces you to urge this repugnant sacrifice on me? I am sure you would not deceive me," she added, with a half-dignified haughtiness that might well carry something to her father's heart. "You would not stoop to obtain my compliance by even a passing deception."

"No," he said, firmly. "No, Elgiva; I will accept your noble trust. I will confess to you that there are reasons of terrible strength that make me anxious you should condescend to this foreigner and disarm the slightest suspicion on her part. It may be a too susceptible alarm—it may be the weakness of enfeebled strength and approaching age that makes me think so. But, in any case, I would desire to be safe. I would ask it as a favour—a boon of my only child—to save me from any such danger or uneasiness."

There was scarcely a possibility of resisting such an earnest, terrible appeal, and Elgiva's heart told her that she was in truth rather doing a bitter penance than indulging in the slightest gaiety in such compliance.

"As you will, father," she said, "as you will. Only I shall go through it as a filial duty, as a faint imitation of the bravery and the self-sacrifice of him who has been so cruelly injured and whose memory I shall ever mourn while life lasts. What is the next step to be taken in it?" she asked, with some haughtiness. "Am I to request an interview with this stranger duchess and inquire what she demands of me?"

"Elgiva, do not speak so cruelly," he returned.

"You must know—you must see—that there is a deep if long-buried misery in my heart that I dare not even console by sharing it with any human being. Child, you fancy you are miserable and to be pitied," he said, more passionately than he seldom allowed himself to speak, "but, if you could guess but one-hundredth part of the agony that conscience and terror occasion you would think your suffering but a light and bearable endurance, such as is a Paradise compared to mine. Now once again I would request you to complete your sacrifice—if you so call it—by appearing not to consider it one. Be sweet and peaceful and bright, as your own natural self, my darling, and I can scarcely fear that any one can resist the fascination you can throw around you if you will."

The girl shook her head sadly.

"Alas, papa! There is one who is hard and relentless as iron, whatever might be the power exerted over him. Do not flatter yourself that I, or anything save self-interest and ambition, would avail to overcome any purpose of his. It is but bravery and firmness that can avail, and that he shall not find wanting in your daughter if she be put to the proof."

There was indeed an exchange of characters in the parent and child at that moment.

The daughter, even in her submission, appeared superior and even queenly in her humility, while the count, with all his years, his paternal authority, and his pride, was fain to sue to the girl he had brought up from her infancy as his child.

There was little more said, save to arrange Elgiva's reply to the invitation thus given, and then she quietly completed her task, and with a brief career rose from her post, and, requesting her father to leave her for the task before her, she proceeded calmly to execute her promise.

At the very day and hour when this scene was passing there were two equally engrossed with important consultations on plans and retrospects.

Amice De Castro was reclining on a low pile of cushions, which it was, as it seemed, her very caprice to prefer to any other couch. It might perhaps be one of the remains of that gipsy tent life that had so long been her experience.

There was something in her attitude and whole air which spoke of the unrestrained and lithic grace of those children of nature and wandering lives.

Perhaps it was that which spread so strange a fascination round the girl to those who had only been accustomed to more conventional forms and manners.

Even the titled dame who sat opposite to her in that luxurious boudoir could not but confess and yield in a measure to its power.

"Amice," she said, "do you know that you will have to go through a weary task if you would really shine in this coming festivity? It is no easy matter to learn by heart and also to acquire the spirit and the style of a heroine in one of these elaborate sensation plays. Were you to fail, I fear your mortification would be even greater than any triumph you can hope to attain."

Amice drew herself up proudly from her soft cushions.

"Have you asked her—I mean Lady Elgiva? Is she going to act also?" she inquired.

"I do not doubt it. I have a way of ensuring her compliance," replied the Duchess of San Alva.

"Then you need not fear my failure," said Amice, proudly. "I could not even waste an hour in sleep till I was perfect, were it necessary. I had rather die than yield to it and fail before that proud girl."

"That would scarcely avail, it seems to me," returned the duchess, with a half-satirical smile. "It would rather tend to ruin your beauty and blight every chance of brilliancy or success. However, if you give up your whole mind to it, and are as lovely and graceful in 'Elgiva' as you are in your own proper character, I do not think there will be much to fear."

"My own proper character?" said the girl, scornfully. "It is difficult to decide what is my real position. Am I a gipsy girl, a high-born maiden, or a bride elect—which, my kind duchess?"

"Time will show, Amice," returned the duchess, calmly. "But much will depend on yourself, much will hang on the events of this season, on the fascination and the power that you can exert over him who you love and who you desire to love you. Ay, yet more, if you can win one, whom you have already caught for your admirer and your slave, the future Marchioness of Easton might well bid defiance to the stings of envious tongues or the contempt of the proudest."

"But it is not so. I do not love him. I will never be happy if he whom I do desire for my husband be taken by another."

"But it shall not be, it shall not be," eagerly interrupted the duchess, "only exert yourself, only be what you are capable of being, and then there can be no one who would be likely to surpass you in the opinion or the affections of any human being."

Then you have decided, have you, on undertaking the character; you will not fear the talent or the beauty or education of your rival?" she resumed, quietly.

"No," said the girl, proudly. "No, there need be no fear where there are a strong will and a warm heart. Rely on me. The prize shall be mine, the palm awarded to me by the most critical of tongues. Ah," she added, clasping her hands eagerly. "If she do but come, if she do but give me the chance of surpassing her in all that she most boasts of possessing."

Even as she spoke the words a servant entered the room with a scented billet on a salver.

The duchess glanced at the crest and then hastily tore open the missive.

"Yes," she said. "Be at rest. The Lady Elgiva has accepted my invitation, and we shall soon have the opportunity of testing the powers of the peeress and the peasant, the patrician and the Zingara maiden, for love and war."

(To be continued.)

### HOPS.

THE hop is a perennial, but to prepare the plants for a new ground or "garden," as these plantations are generally called, the young shoots are taken off the old roots and planted in beds prepared for their reception, so as to establish the plants previously to their being transplanted to the hop-garden itself. When thus transplanted they are placed usually in threes, that is, three plants together in a triangular form, leaving about six inches between each plant. These groups of three are arranged in rows usually about six feet apart, the groups in each row alternating with those in the adjoining row.

The appearance of an English hop-garden, when the plants are fully grown, cannot be likened to any other branch of British culture. Indeed, it has frequently been compared to the aspect of the vineyards of Southern Europe, as much from the resemblance of the habits of the two plants as from the similarity of the mode of gathering the fruit.

The hop frequently requires some little care and attention to secure the perfect fertilization of the flowers, the plants being dioecious—that is, the male and female flowers growing on separate plants. The male or pollen-bearing ones are therefore frequently grown with the females, so as to ensure a perfect impregnation; for where there is an abundant supply of pollen the hops are more plentifully produced, and a finer kind is the result.

The effects of insect agency in fertilizing flowers, by carrying pollen from one plant to another, is well exemplified in the hop. Some planters, whose surrounding hedges are filled with the wild hop, which is always the barren or male plant, trust to the combined assistance of insects and the wind in disseminating the pollen from the wild to the cultivated plants.

The difference between the male and female flowers is that the former are in loose drooping panicles, and the latter in close catkins or cones, forming the hops of commerce; these cones are composed of a series of imbricated scales, each scale having at its base two inconspicuous flowers. There are other botanical distinctions too technical to enter on here.

Many varieties of hops are known in commerce, but the principal kinds in cultivation are "Goldings," "white bines," "grapes," "Jones's," and "Colgates." The first of these are of the choicest flavour, and are used chiefly for pale and strong ales. White bines are also of a fine flavour, and of great strength, and are used for keeping ales. Grapes and Jones's are used for a similar purpose; while Colgates are usually of a coarser, stronger flavour, and are used mostly for the rougher kinds of ales, as well as for porter and stout.

Johnston in his "Chemistry of Common Life" says, "Though the specific action of each of the chemical principles contained in the hop flower has not been very well ascertained, the united action of all of them together is well known. The tinctures and extracts of hops which we use in medicine and introduce into our beers contain them all; so that all the virtues of the hop, in whichever of the ingredients it resides, are present in them in a greater or less degree. Hence well-hopped beer is aromatic, tonic, soothing, tranquillizing, and in a slight degree narcotic, sedative, and provocative of sleep. The hop also aids in clarifying malt liquors, assists the fermentation before all the sugar is converted into alcohol, and thus enables them to be kept without turning sour."

The bitter, aromatic property of the hop is due to a yellow resinous substance, which covers the scales and contains an active principle called "Lupulin." Hop flowers, upon distillation, have also been found to contain about eight per cent. of volatile oil; it is to the escape of this volatile narcotic property that the hop has been recommended for stuffing pillows for the sake of producing sleep. It

is said that hop-pillows were first prescribed in 1787 to George III.; and it is not a little remarkable that they should again have been had recourse to in the late severe illness of the Prince of Wales.

### SCIENCE.

THE LILUM AURATUM.—M. Pynaert says that the perfume of the flower of *Lilium auratum* is obnoxious to flies, which are rendered inert by it, and which disappear from a room in somewhat less than half an hour after the introduction of a bloom of this noble lily into it. Will some one try it?

THE INFLUENCE OF VEGETABLE PERFUMES.—An Italian professor has made researches which lead him to assert that vegetable perfumes exercise a healthful influence on the atmosphere, converting its oxygen into ozone, and thus increasing its oxidizing influence. The essences that develop the largest quantity of ozone are those of Cherry Laurel, Cloves, Lavender, Mint, Juniper, Lemons, Fennel and Bergamot; those that give it in less quantity are Anise, Nutmeg, Cajuput, and Thyme. The flowers of the Narcissus, Hyacinth, Mignonette, Heliotrope, and Lily of the Valley develop ozone in closed vessels. Flowers destitute of perfume do not develop it, and those which have but slight perfume develop it only in small quantities. As a corollary from these facts the professor recommends the use of flowers in marshy districts, and in places infested with animal emanations, as the powerful oxidizing influence of ozone may destroy them. The inhabitants of such regions should surround their houses with beds of the most odorous flowers.

CHLOROFORM AMONG THE CHINESE.—According to a reputed discovery by M. Stanislaus Julien, it appears that, so far back as the third century of our era, the Chinese were in possession of an anæsthetic agent which they employed in the same manner as we use chloroform and ether for producing insensibility during surgical operations. A description of this was discovered by M. Julien in a work preserved in the "Bibliothèque Nationale"—called "Kou-kin-tong," or a "General Collection of Ancient and Modern Medicines"—which appears to have been published in the sixteenth century. In a biographical notice of Hoa-tho—who flourished under the dynasty of Wei, between the years 220 and 230 of our era—it is stated that he gave the sick a preparation of chanvre (Ma-yo), who in a few moments became as insensible as one plunged in drunkenness or deprived of life; then, according to the case, he made incisions, amputations, and the like. After a certain number of days the patient found himself re-established, without having experienced during the operation the slightest pain. It appears from the biography of Han that this chanvre was prepared by boiling and distillation.

ROLLING OF SHIPS.—The following is a mode of recording the rolling of a ship in a seaway, indicating also the form of the waves:—A revolving cylinder, covered with paper and turned by clockwork, receives the marks made by several pens. One of these pens records time, jerks being given to it by an exact clock. The apparatus being placed at the centre of gravity of the ship, a pendulum oscillating in a plane transversely with the keel records continuously by a second pen the angles which the ship at each moment makes with the mean or effective surface of the wave. Another pen, actuated by a rocking arm, kept level by an observer on deck, and being pointed to the horizon, records by a third pen the angle the ship makes with the horizon. From the records thus obtained the amount of rolling of the ship may be at once shown, and the form of the wave could be easily worked out graphically. An apparatus has also been completed in which is employed a heavy stationary wheel so delicately supported as not to receive any rotation from the motion of the ship. This wheel, placed transversely in the ship will remain still without rotating, and thus supply the place of the horizontal bar above described, held level by the observer on deck.

A NEW VENTILATION FOR RAILWAY CARRIAGES.—The Queen's saloon carriage on the London and North-Western Railway has had affixed to it a new description of ventilator. Outside the carriage nothing strange is noticeable beyond three little projectors on the roof right over where the lamps are generally let in. These protuberances are what are called the caps of the ventilator. The movement of the train causes them to work and keep up a thorough ventilation inside each carriage to which it is affixed. The arrangement in the interior of the roof of the carriage is nothing more than an ornamental grating. Between the grating and the cap outside there is a cavity for the lamp. The cap is so constructed that ingress to wind and rain is wholly prevented. The cap rotates without noise, and by an ingenious mechanical arrangement creates an upward current which carries away all impure gases

that may be generated. This obviates the necessity of opening the windows of railway carriages in damp and cold weather—the only resource one now has to escape the offensive and deleterious atmosphere which too often pervades railway carriages. This cleverly arranged little appliance can be fixed upon any railway carriage without disturbing present arrangements. It improves some of them, for being placed over the lamps the ventilator supplies them with air, so that their illuminating power is maintained whatever may be the state of the weather. This ventilator can be as easily fitted into omnibuses, holds of vessels, etc., as railway carriages.

ELECTRIC RAILWAY BRAKE.—An experiment has recently been made at the Bow Station of the North London Railway of a new railway brake, in which electricity is the chief agent. The new brake is the invention of a gentleman named Olmstead, and appears to have been worked with success on some of the United States railways. The electric arrangement is as follows:—A horizontal swing shaft is placed within the car-trunk parallel with the car-axle, on which shaft is a loose shell-pully, which receives motion from the car-axle against which it rests. Within the loose pulley is a fixed pulley keyed on the swing shaft. On the face of the fixed pulley are two powerful electro magnets, each capable of sustaining 800 pounds, so that their combined force is 600 pounds. These are connected by wires with a battery on the car, each car having its separate battery. A chain extends from the swing shaft to the brake lever. On the locomotive or van is a large Highton's battery. An ordinary telegraphic wire extends the whole length of the train underneath the carriages connected with each brake, and connected between the carriages by a simple device arranged instantaneously. On the locomotive or van a keyboard, by means of which the guard or driver can apply the electricity to the whole of the train at once, is placed—the wires connecting the batteries in each separate carriage. The wires extend to a key-board attached to the ceiling of the car, and the electric connection is made at this point by a simple lever or key worked by the bell-cord. On pulling the cord, or by the breaking of the coupling, the electric circuit is made and the magnets draw the loose and fixed pulley together, whereupon the swing shaft winds up the brake chain, and the brakes operate on the wheel and stop the train. The invention was tried by General W. B. Chapin, the agent to the "Electric Car Brake" in this country, between Bow and Poplar, and it appeared to work, as far as that short journey would permit one to judge, satisfactorily. The experiment will be repeated on a larger scale in a short time.

EDUCATION IN SPAIN.—Some years ago there was a legend about that Noah had been permitted to revisit the earth. He wandered about from country to country, ill at ease in each of them. Nothing was natural—nothing was as it used to be. Steamboats and railroads, telegraph wires and lucifer matches, with a thousand other innovations, met him at every turn. The legend says at length he reached Spain; then the sadness of his countenance changed, his eyes sparkled with delight, and in the exuberance of his joy, he threw up his hat, and thank'd Heaven that there was one country which remained just as he had left it.

DISCOVERY OF TOMBS.—In the commune of Hardhausen, about a league from Hagenau, some highly interesting tombs have been recently opened, which are supposed to be Celtic. Among them is one which contains most probably the remains of a chieftain. The head lay on a pillow of bark, and the breast and shoulders were pressed in by the planks containing the skeleton, which was loaded with ornaments. Round the neck were rings, and on the arms were bracelets, while rings were also found encircling the bones of the fingers. Rings also encircled the thighs and legs, and about the head were numerous pins, which had served as ornaments for the hair. On the breast was an oval copper-plate, on which lay a number of nuts in excellent preservation, and two nuts were found pushed in between the teeth.

EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT STIMULANTS.—The following is a translation of a paragraph found in the writings of Professor Von Liebig, the distinguished German chemist:—"The white wines are hurtful to the nervous system, causing trembling, confusion of language, and convulsions. The stronger wines, such as champagne, rise quickly to the head, but their effects are only of short duration. Sherry and strong cider are more quickly intoxicating than the generality of wines, and they have a peculiar influence on the gastric juices of the stomach. The intoxication of beer is heavy and dull, but its use does not hinder the drinker from gaining flesh. The drinkers of whisky and brandy are going to certain death. Red wine is the least hurtful, and, in some cases, really beneficial."





[PAUL FOSS RETURNS FROM THE MARKET.]

## THE SECRET OF SCHWARZENBURG.

### CHAPTER III.

This secret is so weighty 'twill require  
A strong faith to conceal it. Henry VIII.

THERE is another island towards which the diverging lines of our story lead us. It is very little in appearance like the beautiful gem which the deep rolling Danube bore upon its bosom in royal pride, merely a long, narrow, rocky strip of land lying parallel with a bleak, sterile coast, against which the unobstructed waves from an ocean-wide travel came thundering and shattering in white lines of surf.

One can see none of that luxuriant verdure or the velvet turf that Aubrey Dalberg had admired so much at Schwarzenburg. There were either sharp, precipitous ledges of slate or broad, white lines of sand at the base. A few stunted plants with a chilly-looking blue blossom crept into the interstices of the higher rocks wherever a bit of warm earth had lodged, but the whole aspect was bleak and bare, only enticing upon a garish July or August day, when the salt air and the cool sea breeze are more welcome than the deepest woodland shade or the fairest bower of blossoming.

However, the island had its habitations, six of them, strung along the rough, tortuous road that led over the one smooth strip of beach, and wound up the hill to the single pretentious building—the latter, indeed, only in the matter of comparison, for the other buildings were such humble, indifferent affairs that an ordinarily comfortable mansion looked quite grand beside them.

Four of these latter were fishermen's cabins; one belonged to a queer fellow, a singular compound of surliness and good humour, called by some Nat the Hermit, and by others Mr. Nathaniel the Taxidermist, by which two characters he was solely known on the island and upon the neighbouring shore.

Nat lived entirely alone and performed the various duties of housekeeper apparently to his own satisfaction, for no one else was ever called in to his assistance.

That the man was neat-fingered and dextrous people had ample proof who obtained a peep into his cabinet, where a miniature grove supported the life-like forms of many of the beautiful winged creatures which came with the summer visitors, but which, if they were rare specimens, seldom escaped Nat's unerring rifle or obtained opportunity to depart.

Nat's home was supposed to be upon the island, but there were weeks and weeks when his cheery

cabin window had its green paper curtain down and when his door was locked against every visitor.

The neighbours would only shrug their shoulders and say, "Nat's off again on tramp," and, because the thing was so frequent an occurrence, they forebore to be curious in the matter.

But we are lingering at the taxidermist's cabin and neglecting the great house on the hill, which no one of the humble inhabitants of the place would think of doing, for, however careless they may be with regard to Nat's comings and goings, no member of the Foss family stirs an inch without being followed by curious glances and numberless queries.

The house is a large, rambling affair, originally built by a rich merchant, who took the notion to enjoy the advantage without the discomfort and crowd of a fashionable watering-place.

So the building was perched upon the highest ground, with long piazzas fronting the sea, and with wide doors that could be set open so that the keen salt air should circulate in every room.

The merchant had spent but two seasons at the house, and then had tired of the place, and it had stood tenantless, except for a few weeks in the warmest weather, year by year, until a queer, foreign-looking man had come over to the island, seen the empty building, and, making inquiries, found out that the place was for sale.

A week from that day the fishermen and their wives were electrified by the information that "Rock House," as it was called, had been sold. Be sure there was inattention to nets and housework when the boatloads of furniture arrived and were carted up to the mansion.

But the most intense interest concentrated on the boat that finally brought a group of half a dozen people to take possession.

There were two men and three women, tall, thin, dark-haired, all of them, and with a marked family likeness, so that for a long time the people below could not tell when they were speaking to Mr. Paul or to Urbanus Foss, nor be sure whether it was Theodosia or Rhoda or Penelope, when they saw the tall, straight figure of a woman emerge sedately from Rock House and take the path down to the landing.

There was a great deal of speculation and gossiping concerning the Foss family, but the little information obtained, during the first year of their residence among them, was the extent of the islanders' knowledge at the end of the ten years, which still found them in possession of the Rock House, evidently established there for life.

They were of foreign origin; that any one of ordinary sagacity could see at once. Their look and way and dress each had its own quaint peculiarity. Their nationality had not puzzled people either, for

all had unanimously pronounced them French, which was confirmed when old Ben White came hobbling away from his first long talk with Mr. Urbanus Foss—the eldest of the family and the most communicative by far.

"French, of course; I told you so!" said Ben. "He's told me a lot about Paris. By jingo! it made me wish I'd been a merchant sailor, instead of a poor fisherman, to hear him tell about it. I s'pose I might ha' seen all the fine foreign places if I'd been a mind."

"That's no news! If it's all you've found out, it's no great good you've got out of your long talk," quoth Martha, his wife.

"Maybe it ain't; you women folk want to jerk in the line at the first bite. Now which were the two you called the men's wives? Which were the two Mrs. Fosses?" asked Ben, with a sly twinkle in his eye, which Martha noted, and governed herself accordingly, naming the two she had hitherto doubted, and leaving out altogether the one she had been so positive was the mistress of the house.

Ben laughed out in due enjoyment of having caught one who was usually a little ahead of him.

"No, marm; guess again, Martha; you know you're good at guessing."

"Of course it's the one that's left, the tallest woman, the one whose eyes snap so," returned his wife, somewhat crestfallen.

Upon which Ben laughed again, longer and louder than before.

"Ho, ho! ha, ha! Well, now, Marthy, as you're a living woman, there ain't a married one among 'em. They're just brothers and sisters, and if that ain't an odd family—five of 'em, and nary one married!"

"But there's a child—the girl," ejaculated the astonished woman.

"Yes, but she's nary bit a relation. It's a girl they've adopted, I expect."

"Do tell! well now, that beats all. They're queer folks, ain't they?"

And queer folks they remain still, after the ten years' residence.

Fraternalizing very little with outsiders, they had yet obtained a sort of hold upon the affections of the simple people among whom they had come, while commanding also a hearty respect and a rather vague awe.

We are going with Mr. Paul Foss to take our first look at the Rock House. That gentleman has just landed after a visit to the town, and he brings a light basket of groceries on his arm, which he hands promptly to the thin, angular woman who opens the rear door for him, and glances quickly, with those sharp black eyes of hers, over his person, and almost

immediately pounces upon a broad streak of dust upon the skirt of his coat.

"There, Paul, you must let me brush you! Don't come a step farther. I do wish those shopkeepers would try to be a little decent. You've been sitting down on some of their dusty benches, and there's two or three spots. I've no doubt they're oil. Do take off the coat, Paul, and let me clean it," cried she, in a shrill, high-toned voice, as if speaking to a deaf person, and running off the words so swiftly that a stranger could hardly have followed her.

This was Theodosia, the eldest of the three Misses Foss.

She was known on the island from the others, after a year's residence, by her straight, erect figure, and by the way she carried her head, with her little, sharp nose turned up to the air as if scenting out some impurity somewhere. Besides, her eyes were smaller and blacker, her hair grayer and scantier, if possible, than Miss Rhoda's, although all three wore the same sort of little wispined knot pinned up behind with a monstrous shell comb that looked as incongruous as a giant's helmet upon a baby's head.

Paul meekly resigned his coat, and went back to scrape his feet a second time.

By this time the sound of their voices had brought a pair of eyes to every door in the room, and there were four of the latter.

Two other Misses Foss appeared, very like the eldest, with the same thin, spare form, and in just such an immaculate print dress, with the very same style of wide muslin collar, snowy white, and pinned with exactness by a square, old-fashioned breastpin containing a twisted bow of gray hair.

Closer scrutiny showed you that Rhoda entirely lacked Theodosia's energetic, commanding way, that she had a little nervous affection of the facial muscles, and a timid, irresolute smile with which she turned helplessly to her sister at the slightest difficulty.

Penelope, the youngest of the family, while she possessed the same features and general air, had yet a marked personality of her own. She had evidently been more comely than the others, her complexion was still fairer, her eyes larger, and it seemed deeper, for when you looked into them, which, to be sure, few people had ever done, you read there a startling suggestion. She was not a woman like the others, her whole thought did not spend itself on the little details of housekeeping or the perpetual battle against dust and wear and tear. Somewhere, down deep in her soul, this Penelope had another world whither the true woman retired to dream, in agony or ecstasy—who but herself could tell which? She was quiet in the house, talking far less than Rhoda, but yet, in her way, resisting Theodosia's automatic ways.

Penelope and Paul were the closest friends of the household, although it was a little remarkable, for Paul was as tyrannical and authoritative in his way as Theodosia, with whom, from her very childhood, Penelope had seemed to clash.

Urbanus, the second son, was very like Rhoda, except that he had more assurance. He was a kind-hearted, genial man, and, as we have hinted before, it was he who mixed most with the fishermen, and loved to linger over his foreign stories.

Urbanus had come to the side door, his spectacles pushed up upon his forehead.

"Ah, yes; so you've come home again, Paul? I hope you didn't forget those screws I wanted?" he said, blandly.

Paul put his hand in his pocket, but at that moment a rich, clear voice called from the farther door, that which opened into the parlour, and thither every eye turned promptly.

A fair young girl stood there, looking fairer and sweeter and fresher for the contrast of her surroundings, as a rose has ten-fold loveliness blossoming out of a hedge of thorns, and startling one with the sweet surprise.

"Uncle Paul, do tell me quickly if the paper has come! I am so impatient for it. I hope you will not tease me by delay, Uncle Paul."

The winsome blue eyes smiled sanely upon him, but Mr. Paul's manner held more than affection or admiration, a nameless air of deference, and he bowed as the old cavaliers used to bend before their sovereign princess.

And straightway he produced a neatly tied roll from his inner pocket, pulling out also as he did so and dropping to the floor a large foreign-looking letter, the envelope bluish-gray, with a row of stamps across the top.

"Yes, Miss Leina, I have brought it."

The blithe young fairy danced across the floor, took it, and kissed the tips of the fingers which gave it with an airy grace that was inborn, and then flew away, and was the next instant unconscious among the pile of white cushions in the great chair that was wheeled into the bay window which looked out upon the sea from the front chamber.

The group left behind stared from each other to the foreign-looking letter, which still lay upon the floor. Theodosia was the first to speak. She dropped the brush and coat—actually dropped them both

without a thought of putting either in its proper place.

"Another letter, Paul!" exclaimed she, in her high, incisive voice; "and there is no remittance due yet. Then it must be something extraordinary. Have you read it?"

"No, Theodosia. Is it likely I would read it before I brought it before you all? Come, let us go together and break the seal. Are you ready, Urban?"

"Certainly; just let me get my other glasses—these are the far-sighted ones," responded Urbanus, darting back into the work-room, where he had been employed at a tool-bench.

Theodosia took off her apron, folded it and laid it on the table. She stooped also to pick up the fallen coat and brush, then carefully shook out the folds of her skirt, but by any chance a stray atom of dust had lodged there, and should be carried into the grand room of the house. Rhoda had been standing still, pulling helplessly at the ribbons of her black silk apron. She looked over to Theodosia inquiringly, started and shook her own dress, and then quickly followed the elder sister's lead, and moved on toward the little room where all the solemn consultations of the family were held, with the outside show of impartial discussion at least, although Theodosia and Paul usually settled everything.

Penelope did not follow the others at once. She stood leaning against the wall, her hands clasped behind her, her eyes fixed upon the latter. The lowered lids hid from her brothers the wild terror, the fierce anguish which those eyes betrayed. When Paul picked up the letter she gave one deep, convulsive shudder, then turned slowly round and followed behind Urbanus.

Theodosia had pulled up the green velvet curtain of the solitary window of the library, a tiny room holding a centre table, a tall bookcase with glass doors, five high-back chairs, and a picture hanging under a green curtain.

Miss Theodosia had already taken her seat, and with a becomingly grave face awaited her brother's motions.

Rhoda stood with her hand on the back of her seat, flattered and amused as usual upon any event out of the common routine.

When the others entered she sat down, and then started up again, and finally settled herself, working off her agitation by plaiting and unplaiting her fingers in the folds of her dress.

Penelope, on the contrary, though her very heart seemed bursting beneath the mighty throb which also choked her breath, dropped down into her seat and, turning her face to the window, never afterwards moved an inch.

Paul took up the letter, carefully inserted a paper knife under the seal, moving with tantalizing slowness as he separated it from the paper intact, and laid the stamped wax carefully on one side.

Then he spread open the paper, smoothed it out, and read aloud:

"June 20.

"Danger menaces your charge. Let there be strict seclusion and constant watchfulness. These are the strict commands of one high in authority. Be cautious in all respects. Only a few months longer and you will be relieved of the anxiety and care. Remember, positively strict seclusion."

There was neither signature nor address to the letter, but that seemed no matter of surprise to the Foss family.

"Danger!" ejaculated Rhoda, lifting up both hands. "Oh, Theodosia, what can it be? What does his lordship—"

"Hush! hush! Rhoda! you will always be such an imprudent child!" exclaimed Theodosia, shaking her long finger in Rhoda's face. "If there is danger the very walls cannot be trusted. Why can't you say 'he'—we all understand whom you mean?"

Urbanus reached over and took the letter, and read it through carefully.

He passed it on to Theodosia, who put on her spectacles and likewise looked it over.

"There can be no mistake about the writing," said she, holding it in turn to Rhoda.

Rhoda was still frightened; she shivered as she glanced at the letter, and dropped it into Penelope's lap as if it had burned her. The latter took it up, her cold fingers closing over the paper with a fierce grasp. For a little time it lay in her lap, and she sat staring down at it. Then suddenly she looked up, and cried out, sharply:

"In a few months! must also leave us in a few months? Oh, that is cruel, cruel!"

"I am trying to think," said Paul, "what danger there can be. It has not certainly come from any indiscretion of ours. We have never had a stranger within our walls, nor allowed even a servant in the house to spy upon us."

"It is not likely. If the danger was near us we should have received warning of it," returned Theodosia, in her decided fashion. "Something has probably leaked out there. It may be some one is coming to search."

"Good heavens! if that terrible man himself should come," cried out Rhoda, starting up in a panic at the bare suggestion.

"Rhoda!" exclaimed Theodosia, severely, "you always were a simpleton. How is he going to find us in this retired spot? You know we have none of us ever strayed half a dozen miles away from it. Besides, is he not a prisoner, watched and guarded on every side? Do try to make less absurd speeches. I think, Paul, we must deny her the walks now, although she has enjoyed them so much."

"Of course we must; that is settled. And you, Urbanus, must keep close watch of all approach to the island. Given if everything were discovered it would be stratagem and not force that we should be called to meet. It would be very trying indeed if, after three long years of faithful devotion to the cause, a few months should defeat the whole."

"It shall not be defeated!" quoth Theodosia, with flashing eyes. "Is not our very honour bound up in its success? Was it not a proud and honourable duty that was given to our keeping? and will it not be our crown of glory when it is fulfilled?"

Penelope still sat with drooping head and lowered eyelids. Half-unaware that her thoughts were taking shape, she murmured:

"And when it is fulfilled we shall have lost Leina—oh, we shall have lost Leina from our midst."

"There it is again!" retorted Theodosia. "You will all bear me witness how often I have reported Penelope for forgetting who Leina really is. I warned you against setting your affections upon her as you might have done with an ordinary child. Again and again I have warned you. Don't blame me if you suffer from it now."

"I don't blame you, Theodosia," returned Penelope, humbly. "I do not know as you could help me if you had the will. The child has crept very closely into my heart, and I cannot let her go without a pang."

"Of course, that is natural. I love her myself, but I have constantly schooled myself to be prepared for a separation. To be sure we did not expect it for three years longer, yet what real difference does it make since the trial finally comes?"

"Three years! ah, three years seem so long beside a few months," answered Penelope. "They are long enough, perhaps—who knows—for me to die in," she added, under her breath.

"It will be a dreary place here without her bright face," said Urbanus, ruefully. "We shouldn't stay here."

"Ay, you needn't be too hard on Penelope, Theodosia; your heart is not so tender as hers, nor mine either, but it gives me a sharp twinge to think of losing her," added Paul.

"Think of our father's dying injunction. Think of having faithfully fulfilled this trust he and our noble patron gave to us," retorted Theodosia, warming up at this opposition. "Besides, does not she go to a grand and enviable station, and cannot you love her there? What foolish sentimentality. I long to enjoy her astonishment and delight when she knows it all. I am glad the time is shorter than we expected."

Penelope did not say any more. She sat there very still and silent, looking out of the window. She turned around slowly, however, when she heard the click of the sliding brass rings, as Theodosia's firm hand swept away the green curtain from the single picture upon the wall.

The others all rose and stood before the charming, life-like picture in a silent, motionless group. A proud, triumphant smile was on Theodosia's face, and Paul's eyes reflected it. Urbanus's lips kept a tender gravity, and Rhoda put her handkerchief to her face and fell to weeping silently. But Penelope, with grim-set lips and ashy face, sat there by the window and shuddered. And the picture showed the sunny isle and the proud old towers of Schwarzenburg Heights.

"How I long to show and disclose all to her," repeated Theodosia, exultantly, as she dropped the curtain again.

(To be continued.)

**HIS MAJESTY'S VISIT TO DUNROBIN.**—At a dinner given recently at Golspie, in connection with the annual B. B. Volunteer competitions, the Duke of Sutherland read a letter he had received from Her Majesty, in her own handwriting, in which she expressed the great pleasure which her visit to Dunrobin had afforded her, observing also that it had been the happiest period of her life since her bereavement. The reading of the letter was received with loud cheers.

**COWPER'S LAST RESIDENCE.**—The house at East Dereham, Norfolk, in which Cowper spent the last three and a half years of his life is about to be pulled down, and a Congregational chapel built on the site. The house has already been bought (excepting a small portion sold separately to a purchaser), and plans have been prepared for a "neat Gothic structure," which is to be called the "Cowper Congregational



Church." The writer appeals to "intelligent Non-conformists through the country, much more than to Churchmen, to expostulate with the Doreham Independents, to point out to them their mistake in vulgarizing the name of Cowper into an advertising machine, and then to aid in the creation of a fund which may make it worth the Independents' while to turn their thoughts elsewhere."

## GLIMPSES OF SOCIETY.

### CHAPTER I.

The chill wind of a December evening drove a drift of hail like snow against the window panes; while Anna Zane stood and watched for the coming of her young husband in the pleasant home which had been her father's bridal gift. Her husband was only a clerk in that father's mercantile house, unable when he won her love and asked for her hand to own a home, and expected, if the boon he asked were granted, to have to go into apartments, or at best to rent a small dwelling, for he knew that Mr. Evert Evans, her father, was a cautious man in all financial deals, and he expected no dowry with his bride, if indeed he got her at all. He was surprised then when, on his wedding-day, the title deed of the house with all its new, well-chosen furniture was placed in his hands; and he was profuse in his grateful pledges to be worthy of her and the kindness of her father.

She was an only and a petted child, the idol of a father whose love was all centred on her when her mother passed away, and he had but one question to propound when his consent to the union was asked: "Will it make my child happy?"

Edward Zane, an orphan, had been reared in his counting-house, and had won his good opinion by his uniform attention to business, his faithfulness to duty, and his apparently excellent habits.

But enough of explanation. The story will weave its own web fast enough.

"What can keep Edward so late?" said the young wife, in nervous solicitude. "He should have been here two hours ago. Mary is fretting because the juices of the meat are drying out while she keeps it warm, and the potatoes, which she delights to see so perfect, are spoiling she says. Ah—a ring at the door-bell! It is not he, for he carries a latch-key."

An instant later a young-looking gentleman, from whose garb it was easy to tell that he was a clergyman, entered, leading a child, lovely even in its rage—for it was miserably dressed—a female child of not over six years, if indeed so old.

"My good Mrs. Zane, will you do me a great favour?" cried this gentleman, without even pausing to pass the usual salutations of an acquaintance.

"Certainly, Mr. Talmage—as my father's dearest friend and as our pastor, your wishes will always meet my prompt attention."

"It is this. Please take care of this poor little wail on poverty's icy river till morning. I found her weeping in the street just now. She had lost her way, and when asking a policeman to show her where her grandparents lived he brutally threatened to take her to the station-house as a vagrant. I am to lecture in Oroyon this evening, and shall be late for the train as it is I fear. So I have no time to seek her home for her to-night, but I will in the morning, if you will kindly keep her till then."

"I will most cheerfully, Mr. Talmage. How good of you to bring the poor thing here."

"Not goodness—only duty, my dear lady. Now good-bye, little one, till morning. This good lady will feed you and keep you warm, and I will come to help you to find your home, and to brighten it maybe!"

The gentleman was gone the next second, for he had just time to catch the train to reach his appointment.

The lady took the hand of the little girl, and while she pressed back the brown, curly hair from her white forehead she said, gently:

"What is your name, little pet?"

"Nellie, ma'am—least that's what grandpa and grandma call me. But the man we rent our room of, when he gets me to go on errand sometimes, calls me Nell. I work so hard. I pray for rain every night, so it will be muddy and I can sweep the crossing. When the policeman don't drive me off I get a whole handful of pennies, because I keep where I sweep so clean it will never spoil the shine of anybody's shoes."

"Poorthing! You are too young to work!"

"Oh, no, ma'am! If I don't work we couldn't pay the rent; two shillings a week it is; and grandpa and grandma must eat. They're old and weak. Grandpa used to make toys, and grandma knit stockings; but they are very old, and they can hardly see now."

"Poor people! When Mr. Talmage finds where they live I will go and see them, and help them all I can."

"Oh, no, ma'am—'twouldn't do for a lady to come where I live. There are bad people there who would rob you, and maybe kill you for the nice clothes you wear, or the rings on your fingers—wicked, wicked people. They drink gin and they swear till I feel cold all over to hear them."

A heavy step at the door interrupted this conversation, and the next instant a young man of fine figure, expressive face and manly looks hurried in.

"My dear husband—my own Edward!" cried the lady as she sprang to her feet and met him with a loving kiss. "Why are you so late? Dinner has been waiting over two hours."

"Anna, my darling, when you hear the news I have to tell you will not chide for my delay. But what urchin is this you have here?" he added, in an angry tone.

"Oh, Edward, do not speak so harshly!"

"Oh, ma'am, I'm used to being spoken cross to. Don't scold the nice gentleman for that," said the child, earnestly. "If I only knew where to find grandpa I wouldn't stay here. I know I'm not nice enough for such a grand house."

"You are, my poor darling, you are!" said Mrs. Zane, tenderly. "When my husband knows that Mr. Talmage brought you here, and asked me to keep you till morning, so that he could help you find your home, he will not speak unkindly to you."

"No, no—that Talmage is always doing something of the kind. But I ought not to be unkind even to a dog just now. I told you, my little wife, I had news! Such news! You would not guess it in a lifetime!"

"Then please save me a lifetime of bother by telling me!" said the young wife, with a smile. "You must be quick, for Mary is putting the dinner on the table. Hear the dishes clatter! She is out of patience, for her potatoes are spoiled."

"Well, darling, make one guess!"

"I am not good at guessing. But to please you I will try. Father has promoted you to a better clerkship—head book-keeper, perhaps."

"Ha! ha! A clerkship indeed!" and the young man laughed scornfully. "Promoted! Why, if there's any promoting to do, I think I'll promote him!"

"Edward, what is the matter? Surely you have not been drinking!"

"Well, no—not much, though I did have to crack one bottle of wine with Count Volchinski, to whom I told the news, darling. I'm a millionaire!"

"A millionaire, Edward? Surely you are crazy, or the wine you drank with that unprincipled adventurer has made you wild!"

"Unprincipled adventurer?" cried the young husband, angrily. "Anna, you must never speak of a friend of mine in that way!"

"That Volchinski is no friend of yours, Edward. Father says, in an adventurer without honour or character. I could tell you more, but I do not wish you to get into trouble with him, as you would if you knew what I could tell you! Do not quarrel with me on his account!"

Tears filled her eyes as she spoke.

The hot flush faded from his cheek and brow as he saw the tears, and he spoke more gently.

"Forgive me, Anna—I was wrong to speak harshly to you. But my good luck has turned my brain, I do believe. I will tell you of it. My uncle in California, of whom you have heard me speak as the richest man on the Pacific Coast, died last month, leaving me all his property by will. In lands, mines, stock and money it amounts to at least four millions pounds, so the lawyers write who have his property in charge, and they have remitted me a large draft to enable me to close all business I may be in here, and to go on and take possession. Isn't that good news?"

"I don't know, Edward! We were very happy and comfortable before. You had a large salary, your own house, and only worked from ten o'clock in the morning to four in the afternoon!"

"Salary and work. Never speak of such things again to me. As the count says the very names are vulgar, and they shock me!"

"Does father know of this?" asked Anna.

"Yes, he was in the counting-house when I got the letter and opened it. I was so astonished I hardly knew what I was doing, and I believe I gave three cheers even there!"

"Oh, Edward, did it not grieve you to hear of the death of your uncle?"

"It would if he hadn't made me his heir. As it is I think he died just at the right time."

"Oh, Edward, I never heard you speak so lightly before, it seems so wrong."

"There, there! Don't begin preaching, dear. But hark—the dinner bell is ringing, and I'm as hungry as I used to be when I was poor."

Laughing, the young husband led the way to the dining-room, whither his wife followed, leading little Nellie by the hand.

"Please, ma'am, don't ask me to eat at the table, he won't like it," said the girl, trembling. "I'd rather have a piece of bread in my hand and go where he can't look so cross at me."

The tender heart of the lady was touched, but she knew the child could not eat where cold looks would chill her appetite and terrify her heart, so she said to the servant:

"You need not wait table to-day, Mary. Take this little one down into the kitchen and give her a nice warm supper."

"I will, mum, for I was a child once myself, without much to warm the heart in me."

She led little Nellie away while Edward Zane was carving the meat and grumbling that it was dry as a bone.

Anna made no reply.

A sad sensation made her heart beat heavily, and she felt that the sky of her wedded life was all at once overcast with a cloud she had not even dreamed of till it came.

Seeming completely oblivious of her presence, not even observing that she did not—in truth, could not—eat, Zane hurried through his own dinner, and, without waiting for dessert, rose from the table.

"Surely you are not going out this evening, Edward?" his wife asked as she saw him reënter the dining-room with his hat on.

"I surely am!" he answered, coolly. "A millionaire has some privileges, has he not, even if he is married? I join the Count Volchinski's club to-night."

"Oh, Edward!"

It was all she said as she turned on his heel and strode away; but the tears trickling down her cheeks spoke more than words could say.

Mary came up, wondering so little had been eaten and her nice dessert was untouched; but when she saw her mistress had been weeping, she seemed to know that there was a cloud where she had seen a sunshine always before, and, with unusually respectful tact, she turned away without saying anything which might add to the sorrow of a heart that had ever been kind to her.

"Did the little girl eat her supper, Mary?" asked her mistress, in a kindly tone.

"Yes, she did, ma'am; but first she said a little prayer. I never see the like in a wee little thing like her."

"She is a good child, Mary, and has been brought up, poor as she is, to thank Heaven for its blessings. Were we all as good there might not be so many shadows in our paths. Bring her to me in the sitting-room. I will try and alter a dress for her, for it may be late before Mr. Zane comes home."

"Shall I sit up with you, ma'am, till he comes?"

"You need not mind me, Mary. I shall make up a bed on the sofa for the child, and I will keep awake with my work."

So Mary went after the little one, and Mrs. Zane went to the sitting-room to eat up a dress of her own and make it up for the child.

The little one was soon with her, and Mrs. Zane, while measuring her for her dress, drew from her all the story she had to tell.

It was not much, only such as thousands in our own great city can tell.

She never had known the loving care of her mother. She didn't believe she ever had a father, because she never heard her grandparents talk of him, though they often spoke of and wept about her mother.

They said her mother was not dead, but she had gone and left her, a baby, to their care; and now they did not know with certainty where she was.

Twice since Nellie had been able to go about they had seen her, dressed very grandly, in a splendid carriage, but she did not, or would not, know them, though the carriage almost ran over them while they called out her name.

It happened that Nellie and her grandparents had hard work to keep alive, for the rent took nearly all the money she could get, and they never ate meat—only bread and sometimes a little soup (when she could get a bundle of wood to cook it with. "Three-pence would buy bones and scrape at the butcher's stall, and 'it would last so long,' the poor child said.

While Anna was thus working and talking her father came in.

"Edward not here?" he asked as soon as he entered. "I hoped to find him sobered down a little so that I could talk to him."

"He has gone out to join a club," said Anna, sadly.

"A club? What club?"

"I don't know what kind of a blup, father—I only know that the vile man who insulted me, Count Volchinski, is at the head of it."

"Then it is a gambling club. Edward must be so crazy! This must be stopped, or he will soon be as characterless as the rascal you spoke of. It is a plan

to rob and ruin him, if he has been induced to join a club which will countenance that fellow. I will take you from him if he dare to make such low and vile associations!"

"Father!"

"What, child, what?" cried Mr. Everts, alarmed at the sudden pallor of her face.

"Edward is my husband!"

"I know it, my child, and for the first time I must say I am sorry for it. When I came in I saw traces of tears on your cheeks. Now I know that he has caused these tears."

"Oh, father. I have been weeping over the pitiful story of this little child, which your friend, Mr. Talmage, brought in from the street this afternoon, asking me to keep her till morning, when he would try and find for her the miserable home where her grandparents live. She was lost."

"Please, ma'am, ours is not such a bad home as some," said Nellie, earnestly. "The Creator is there, for grandpa prays to Him every night before he lies down, and again when he gets up in the morning."

"Bravely spoken, little girl," said Mr. Everts. "The house where prayer is heard cannot be all miserable. I will join Mr. Talmage in seeking your home, and perhaps make a better one for you to-morrow."

"Thank you, sir, but ours is as good as we can afford. The room isn't very damp, and it's not very cold in winter, and don't need fire like large rooms."

"We'll see to it to-morrow," said the merchant, sadly. "And now I'll go home. Tell Edward I must see him at my office to-morrow."

"I will, dear father, but do not speak unkindly to him. He is high-spirited."

"Very, to associate with a common gambler. But for your sake, child, I will be as gentle as I can in my remonstrances. Even without capital I intended to make him a junior partner in my house on the first of January. But now, with all his inheritance, I would not have him unless he relinquished such associates. The mercantile man who frequents a gambling-house is lost. Good-night, my daughter—Heaven shield you. Tell Mr. Talmage when he calls to draw on my purse freely to help this little one and her grandparents."

"I will, father. Good-night."

The young wife turned to her sewing again with a lighter heart.

Her father for her sake would not speak unkindly to Edward, and he might succeed in turning him from danger.

At least she would hope so.

## CHAPTER II.

"COUNT, lend me twenty pounds. I'm broke."

"Certainly, Mr. Bludge, but do, for Heaven's sake, use more select phraseology. The expression 'broke' shocks me. Say anything that is not vulgar. Here is a twenty-pound note. May it multiply in the land of Faro, whither I know it is bound."

The slender, sleek-faced, moustached individual addressed as count was the Volchini alluded to in the first chapter, one of the class often found in great cities—a man who came no one new whence, representing himself to be an Italian count.

The other, coarser in style and manner, with a beard as well as moustache, was a professional gambler or "blackleg," known to the fraternity as Barnabas Bludge. He was like most of his class, keen, conscienceless and daring.

"You seem in a happy humour to-day, count," said Bludge as he pocketed the bank-note.

"There you are again, my dear fellow, with your shocking vulgarity. When you say humour you put me in mind of eruption. Say that I am in a happy frame of mind, and you'll be three-thirds right. By the way, or en passant, I should say, what are you engaged in just now?"

"Nothing, count, or next to nothing. I challenge fortune wherever I can get a chance."

"So much the better for me. I need a clever villain just now to aid me in a petit game I have on hand. I'll use you, if you have no objection."

"None, count, none, if the job pays. But show your hand and let me see what is in it."

"I will. You know Edward Zane?"

"The fellow who won old Evert's daughter after she cut you?"

"Rejected, Bludge. The expression is more refined, less shocking to the nerves. I mean him. I am going to ruin him and break her heart. I tried to win her hand before her marriage with him, but was unsuccessful. I have been foiled, disdainfully repulsed. I want revenge. His ruin and hers alone will satisfy me."

"A clerk isn't worth ruining without you can make him a successful forger, as we did young Ketchum."

"Edward Zane is worth nearly four millions."

"Count, are you mad or intoxicated?"

"Neither, Mr. Bludge, neither. Edward Zane, as you will learn from the papers to-morrow, is the sole heir, by will, of his uncle, just deceased, in California, the richest man in that land of fortune and favour."

"You astonish me. If that is the case he is worth looking to. Does he drink? Can one get him drunk?"

"He imbibes occasionally. He might become inebriated under proper management."

"Well, we will manage him between us. What do you say to having the help of Stella Hayden, for she is as keen as the keenest in planning out work?"

"She is already in it on her own account, as I learned accidentally to-day, and I think if we can induce her to join forces with us we can succeed with double rapidity."

"Good! She'll do whatever I wish. I happen to have a hold on the lady which places her in my power."

"Excellent. With her assistance we'll make his career a fast one, and his fortune shall fill our coffers."

"Millions, you say?"

"Yes—four, at least."

"Fat! fat! What picking he'll be!"

"Corpulent, my dear fellow—or plethoric. Fat is shockingly vulgar. Where are you going now?"

"To test my luck with Sam Selden, the ex-did-gant."

"Pah! they play low there. Vulgar, very. Let game go to-day, and go with me to see Stella Hayden, and lay out a plan of campaign."

"All right, if you'll stand the champagne. Never call on Stella without I feel like drinking."

"Imbibing, my dear fellow—or liquidating the debt of thirst. The term drink is vulgar. These temperance lecturers use it, and horses drink, you know. Gentlemen imbibe."

"Oh, confound it; you're too particular."

"You can't be if you wish to please the ladies."

"Well, if we are to go to Stella Hayden's let's be on the move. I hate to loiter in the street—men know me too well. I've helped to cheat so many lately that I feel as if every man I met would cry out 'Robber!' when he saw me."

"Pah! You are nervous. There is Bon Locust, the head of the policy business, who can count his thousands of ruined men and women where you can't count ten."

"True. But the class he works on are the poor hand-to-mouth people, and to ruin them is nothing. My game has been among clerks, office-boys, and the like. But the dunces take the difference! Ben and I will boil in the same pot in the next world."

"Occupy the same pot, why don't you say? You will persist in such vulgar expressions."

"I can't help it, count; so you talk your way, and I'll run my jaw-tackle in mine. Come on now; for if you know Stella's habits you'll not find her at home in an hour from now—she has other business, and she tells fortunes elsewhere under another name."

"How is it possible when she owns and oversees a fashionable millinery shop? Besides, I understand she is organising a ladies' gambling club, of which I am to be offered the tutorship."

"She is capable of doing all that, and more. She is the most remarkable woman of the age we live in. Her whole aim is to amass a fortune for some purpose. She makes money in everything she touches, and is as utterly unscrupulous as to the means as you or I would be."

"Softly, Mr. Bludge; softly. Do not think that I would condescend to anything vulgar to make money. I would never soil my hand by labour, for instance."

"Should you get a few years at Portland for refreshments, you'd have to come to that."

"Perish the thought! I would commit *felo-de-se* first!"

"Well, follerin' the sea is hard work."

"Idiot! I used the Latin term for suicide. I would as soon go to Portland as to become a nasty, tarry sailor."

"Well, I'm not so particular. But there is no danger of either of us going while we hold the influence we do. But here we are—Stella's crib is natty, isn't it?"

"Her mansion, you vulgar fellow—her mansion," said the count, indignantly, as the two ascended the steps of a very handsome house, to which they had been walking while the foregoing conversation was passing.

## CHAPTER III.

"ELEVEN o'clock!" sighed the sad young wife as she laid the little dress, finished, upon the sewing-machine, which she was not too proud to use, and then she went and tucked the warm shawl around the little guest, for whom she had made a nice bed on the sofa. "Eleven o'clock, and Edward still ab-

sent. Never before has he been away at this late hour without I was with him at a party or at the opera. I am sorry that he has inherited a fortune, for with it, I fear, will come heart-breaking sorrow to me!"

She went to the centre table, where, amid albums, annuals and periodicals, lay a copy of the Holy Bible; she took it up and began to read.

In it she surely found comfort, for another hour passed before she rose from the table.

The iron tongue of the great clock of the neighbouring church slowly tolled the hour, then she was startled by a loud outcry in the street in front of the house.

Trembling, she rushed to the front window, fearing that her husband had been assaulted by some of the thieves, or roughs, who prowl about the streets at such late hours.

"Police! Police!" she heard a man shout as she raised the window.

"Thank Heaven it is not my husband's voice!" she said, and then she saw, near a gas lamp, a genteely dressed man, whose head and face were bleeding.

It was he who cried police. While she looked one of the blue-coated guardians of the peace came up to the stranger.

The next instant she saw two men approaching—one, she felt sure, was her husband, the other she thought she recognized as the detestable Italian, Volchini.

The first walked unsteadily, and was evidently assisted by his companion.

"Oh, merciful Heaven! it is Edward, and fearfully intoxicated!" said Anna Zane as the two passed beneath the glare of the street-lamp. "And that villain Volchini is his companion."

The next moment she saw them ascend the steps and heard the hall bell ring violently.

She hurried to open the door and found her husband there alone.

Steeped in iniquity as he was the count had not yet the hardihood to face that young wife, after having brought her husband to the condition in which she would find him.

"Edward, Edward, do come in! It is after midnight!" she cried as she found him seated on the door-steps.

"Yes, we—we won't go home till—till morning, and daylight doth 'pear!" stammered he, without trying to rise.

"Edward, dear Edward, please come in."

"Yes—Stel—Stella, I'll take 'nother glass. You're a gay gal—here's your health!"

"Stella! What does he mean?" said the wife, shocked, dreading she hardly knew what.

"Millionaire now—do as like. Have wine—'nother bottle! Say, count, what's trumps?—hearts, eh?"

"Oh, it will be a broken heart! Edward, Edward, do come in."

Now the hands of the young wife were on her husband's shoulder, and the light from the lamp fell full on both their forms.

He raised his head, with his eyes red and heavy, but it fell on her face.

It was so ghastly pale that, drunk as he was, he seemed to know or feel the wrong he was doing.

Staggering to his feet, he muttered:

"Why, it's Anna, sure as I'm a man—'tis little Anna. And this is my house. Thought I was somewhere else! Now 'mind—'nev' mind, I'm millionaire now, an' it's all right—all right."

With a heavy lurch he staggered forward, and fell at full length in the hall.

Anna Zane closed the front door, and then, with all her woman's strength exerted, lifted his limp body and dragged it up to his chamber.

She managed to lay it on the bed—she could do no more—then sank to her knees sobbing as if her heart were indeed breaking.

And was it not enough to break her young heart—her husband's manhood lowered, his promises forgotten, his honour darkened by falsehood?

How many husbands, while we pen these lines, are forgetting over the maddening glass the loved ones who weep in neglected homes, while they are sailing along that fatal stream which bears them toward perdition, temporal and eternal?

When day dawned and the sun arose that young wife, who had not even laid her form down to rest, rose from her knees by the bedside of him who slumbered in stertorous stupor, and went down to the sitting-room, where little Nellie, bright-eyed in her innocence and beauty, was fully awake and lost in wonder as she gazed at the beautiful pictures on the walls and the rich ornaments on the marble mantelpiece.

"Did you sleep well, little one?" she asked.

"Thank you, yes, ma'am—so nicely. But I dreamed that grandpa was looking for me, and crying because he couldn't find me."

"Well, darling, Mr. Talmage will be here by—434—"



by, and he will help you to find him. I will dress you now, and then ring for breakfast."

"Oh, ma'am, you are so good to me. I'll put you into my prayers every day, if you'll let me."

"You may indeed, darling, for I need prayers if any one does. Come—here is a new dress for you."

"For me—this nice dress for me, ma'am?" cried the child, delight in her young eyes.

"Yes, dear. I am glad you like it."

"Oh, so much, ma'am; but I'll never dare to wear it where I live. They'll take it from me, and sell it for gin, like they did the warm blanket a good missionary gave to grandma to keep her warm o' nights."

"My poor child, Mr. Talmage and my father will have you and your grandparents moved into a better home, I hope, before the sun of this day sets. Let me get this dress on, and then Mary will wash you and comb your hair."

"Thank you, ma'am, I can do that for myself. I've had to, for grandma can't. How she'll miss me this morning! I am so afraid they're hungry. There wasn't but a little piece of bread left when I went out to carry a basket for Mr. Bellamy. 'Twas doing that I got lost. He is our landlord."

While the artless child thus rattled on Mrs. Zane was putting on her new dress, and now, having finished, she rang for Mary.

"Oh, ma'am, surely you are ill!" cried the servant as she entered the room. "You're as white as a ghost, and the eyes are sunk in your head till they look black as the night."

"Never mind, I am only tired, Mary. I sat up late waiting for Mr. Zane."

"The brute to keep an angel like you up and waiting!"

"Mary! never—never dare to speak in such a manner of my husband, or I shall certainly discharge you!"

"Oh, missis, don't speak that way to me who would die for you. But I couldn't help breaking out to see you suffering, and know who did it!"

"I know you meant well, Mary, and I excuse you this time. But you must remember that Mr. Zane is my husband, whatever he does. Gentlemen now-a-days do many things which we have to be blind to."

"You're right, ma'am; but, if we're blind, we can't be deaf to the voice of reason, can we?"

Mrs. Zane made no reply, but told her to take Nellie down and give her some breakfast.

"Shall I bring you nothing, ma'am?"

"You would have hard work to do that, Mary. You can bring me 'something.' A cup of coffee—that is all."

And Mrs. Zane tried to smile, but failed in the effort.

#### CHAPTER IV.

It was a tumble-down-looking public-house in one of the lowest localities in London, which Peter Bellamy occupied—a building that had not felt pain for fully half a century, with but few panes of glass, but plenty of rags in the windows; however as he let out all but the bar, where he sold his "fine imported" gins, brandies and whiskies, he cared little about repairing it.

Mr. Bellamy needed no sign when he stood in his own doorway. His six feet of muscular humanity was topped with a head of the bull-dog order, his face purple with the tints produced by the beverages which he used as well as sold.

On the morning following the day when the events occurred already noted in our story Mr. Bellamy was standing in the doorway, talking to a woman of his own class, who had been trying to borrow sixpence of him.

"Sure, Mister Bellamy, it's the luck I'll have, for I dreamed of two black cats and a white mouse, and that makes twenty-one I know. Lend me sixpence just and I'll pay ye that and the owld score next wake. Oh, Peter dear, can't ye be asy, standin' there as straight as a steeple and as bloomin' as a holyhock in the garden. If ye'll not lend me the sixpence, just trate me for the sake of our owld acquaintance."

"Not a penny, I say, till ye pay me what ye owe now," replied the ungallant Peter. "What d'ye want now, old man?"

The last question was addressed to a very old but, in spite of his threadbare clothes, respectable-looking man, who crept down the broken stairs from the upper part of the house, and now stood with bent form, partially supported by a cane in one hand while he rested the other on a barrel by the door.

"If you please my little Nellie, my dear granddaughter—have you heard of her to-day? She went on an errand for you yesterday, and we've not seen her since."

"What is she to me?"

"She may be nothing to you, sir, but she is all the world to me."

"Well, then, there she is, comin' this way with a swell cove leadin' her by the hand. Maybe he's got money, and will want a taste of my whisky to take away the smell of the gutters."

"Oh, Nellie, Nellie, darling; where have you been? We were so afraid you had got lost or stolen!" cried the old man, tottering forward to meet the child, who came, led by the friendly hand of Mr. Talmage.

"I was lost, dear grandpa, but this kind gentleman found me and took me to a nice lady, who kept me all night and gave me a nice new dress. See, I have it on. And here is a basket full of bread and meat and cake for you and grandma—and this gentleman is going to take you to a nice new home away from our damp, nasty attic."

"What's that you're sayin'? Would you leave these quarters? I'd like to see you do it. It's on a door ye'd be carried, I'm thinkin'!" cried Bellamy, angrily.

"My good friend, you will oblige me by standing aside while I visit this child's grandmother," said Mr. Talmage, seeing the huge form of the landlord planted directly in his way.

"Stand aside? Is that you mean, and me on my own property? Stand aside for the likes of you, indeed!"

"Yes, for I wish to get out of this foul atmosphere as soon as I can."

"Sooner than you like, maybe, for if I give one yell to the boys here they'll not leave a rag on ye or a bawbee to jingle in yer pockets. Maybe, though, ye'll behave like a gentleman and treat the crowd!"

For a crowd of ragged, blear-eyed, wicked-looking men and women had closed in around the party.

"Never—I despise strong drink and those who use it, or sell it!" said the brave Christian gentleman, turning with undaunted face towards the people, who glowered on him as fiends might look upon a saint.

"At him, boys—at him and strip off his fine feathers!" cried the angry landlord. "Teach him what our street is!"

"Hands off, vile ragamuffins!" shouted a lively little man, well but plainly dressed, who came rushing to the spot. "Know you no better than to offer violence to the minister of Heaven? Off to your dens, before my friend, Superintendent Simmons, gets here with the police!"

The crowd, more alarmed perhaps by the name just uttered than anything else, did scatter in a hurry, while Peter Bellamy slunk away into his den to fortify himself with another drink before he renewed his warfare.

"I thank you, Brother Merritt, for your timely interference!" said Mr. Talmage, warmly, as he grasped the hand of the new comer. "I do believe those rascals would have obeyed the wishes of the unprincipled man who has fled into his house."

"Yes—most likely they would have fallen upon you!" said the brave little man, himself a minister, "but I was on hand, and like David of old I would have smitten the Philistines right and left. But the weapon of Sampson, a little jawbone, did just as well you see. And now what more can I do for you, for I know you are on some good mission or you would not be here?"

"Thank you. I wish to remove a couple of old people and this little girl to apartments which Mr. Evert Everts has kindly given free for their use in one of his houses in a good locality."

"He is a good man and a true Christian. I will gladly help you—but hark!—hear that terrible cry! I must go and see if I can save life!"

And the good little man rushed into a shanty near at hand, whence came the fearful cry of "Murder!" shrieked out shrilly in a woman's voice.

(To be continued.)

#### PROPOSED SOCIETY OF MATCH MANUFACTURERS.

—A meeting of the principal manufacturers of vesuvians and lucifer matches in the metropolis was held the other day with the view of forming an amalgamated society, the objects of which will be to obtain a better price for their goods, to enable masters to meet strikes, and to establish a mixed uniform price for goods throughout the trade.

THE STANDARDS TAKEN BY NAPOLEON I.—The *Univers* has remarked that as the trophies of the wars of Napoleon I. are not to be seen at the Invalides they have probably been restored to the Germans. In reply to this the Paris correspondent of the *Independence Belge* writes that on the night of the 30th March, 1814, the 1,500 or 1,600 banners which hung under the dome of the Invalides were taken down and formed into a pile in the courtyard. The banners, with their lances, surmounted by Russian, Prussian, and Austrian eagles, were set on fire, and upon them were thrown other trophies, such as the sword and regal insignia of Frederick the Great. The ashes of this pile were soon swept up and

thrown into the Seine. Next day, when, after the entry of the allies, a Russian officer came to see the banners, General Darnaud showed him the place where they had been, and told him they had been burned on the previous night.

#### THE CONSTRUCTION AND COST OF RAILWAYS.

TUNNELS are avoided as far as possible, for, besides their costliness, they, if long, necessitate the constant use of lamps in the carriages. They are made only when the excavations would be more than 60 feet in depth, or when land proprietors force their adoption, in order to spare the amenity of grounds near a mansion. For this latter reason some short tunnels are known to have cost railway companies as much as 50,000*l*. The execution of underground railways in the metropolis has offered examples of tunnelling more extensive than were previously known in England, and at the same time popularized a method of subterranean transit almost as marvellous as anything in the way of viaducts across wide and profound chasms.

As regards viaducts, they consist of stone bridges of handsome architecture, or as commonly of malleable iron girders of various forms set in stone piers. In the construction of these stone and iron viaducts there is a growing boldness of conception, arising not only from the success of the famed railway viaducts across the Menai Straits, the river Tamar, and the St. Lawrence, but from the greater experience and skill of engineers.

Owing to the obstructions offered by land-owners, and their excessive claims for a amenity damages, also the opposition of rival companies, the cost of railways was at one time very much greater than it is at present. The expenditure incurred in securing legislative authority to construct railways was likewise enormous. The parliamentary cost of the Brighton Railway averaged 4,806*l*. per mile, of the Manchester and Birmingham 5,190*l*. per mile, and of the Blackwall 14,414*l*. per mile. The cost of carrying the Liverpool and Manchester line was 27,000*l*. It has been shown that the solicitor's bill for the South-Eastern Railway contained 10,000 folios, and amounted to 240,000*l*. These few facts, however, afford but a feeble idea of the reckless wastefulness of capital on railway undertakings; it is universally allowed that, under a better policy, not only a much better railway system might have been provided but a saving effected of at least fifty millions.

In ordinary cases railways with a double line are constructed in England at the cost of 12,000*l*. per mile, station-houses, signals, and all other fixed plant included. Single lines are made at perhaps a fourth less, but nowhere in the United Kingdom have they been executed so economically as in Scotland. There some single lines have cost for land and everything not more than about 5,000*l*. per mile—such economy, however, being greatly due to the fact that the undertakings were promoted and watched over by bodies of land proprietors deeply interested in restraining expenditure. Of these cheap Scotch lines a good example is offered by the Peebles Railway (practically a branch of the North British), extending to 18½ miles, the entire cost of which, land and station-houses included, was about 95,000*l*. The cost of rolling stock was additional.

Every railway, great or small, is at a considerable expense in keeping the line in proper working order, for which purpose a staff of officials is required. Besides, a general superintendent there is an effective staff of "plate layers," whose duty it is to watch over the permanent way, to make small repairs, and to report to the superintendent if anything is seriously deranged. The number of plate-layers on a good piece of road should not exceed three men to each two miles. To stimulate their vigilance a reward of 5*s*. is on some lines given for every broken rail that is promptly discovered. Plate-layers' cottages are erected at convenient distances along the railway. In some instances the cottage adjoins a level crossing, at which gates have to be kept shut across the line to admit the passage of carts, horses, etc., and opened only when trains give the signal of approach; in such cases (mostly on small lines, where economy is studied) the plate-layer's wife is constituted "gate-keeper." Latterly, Parliament has been reluctant to allow level crossings; and these are now chiefly confined to bye-ways or parish roads with little general traffic.

BARON ROTHSCHILD has, it is said, purchased East Lee House, East Cowes, for 8,000*l*., and that he intends to make it the headquarters of a new yacht club.

DISCOVERY OF ROMAN REMAINS IN GLOUCESTER.—Some interesting Roman remains have been brought to light on the premises of Mr. Ramsay, of Southgate Street. An excavation had to be made in the cellar, and at a depth of about 10 ft. from the surface

of the footway the workmen came upon the border of a tessellated pavement. The tesserae are of white and black, first in bands and next worked in a design like that of a carpenter's square. The floor is in excellent preservation. The pavement is laid parallel to the street, as it now exists.

## THE LILY OF CONNAUGHT.

### CHAPTER X.

I'll make assurance double sure,  
And take a bond of fate.  
Macbeth.

THE moat of Castle Connor on the south-western side extended to a considerable width, forming an irregularly-shaped lake, fed by two or three mountain brooks, and emptied by the stream that watered the valley.

This body of water stretched away towards the monastery, and to the foot of a mountain slope, on which stood a convent, hidden by trees.

Across the lakelet, now slightly ruffled by the night breeze, Theresa boldly steered her course. Briskly they bounded along, for the sky was light, and Theresa, trained in the mountain excursions with the princess, was a strong and expert rower. Their course was purposeful, for when she asked her mistress for directions the ever-recurring answer was:

"Oat! Anywhere!—but on!"

At length the night wind freshened, the rippling waters began to heave; light fleecy clouds drifted at intervals across the sky, making the moonlight wild and fitful in its effects. The scene around them became more gloomy and lonely. Castle Connor was a shapeless, indistinct mass, and the white tents upon the plain looked like gravestones, with glowworms coldly shining here and there between, while the faint sounds and flashing lights of such parties as were yet engaged in merry-making gave the idea of a midnight dance of ghouls, with flickering corpse-lights. Still the command of the princess was:

"Oat! on! Anywhere, so it be onwards!"

Suddenly, as they were nearing the farther shore, the solemn notes of the monastery bell rose upon the air and swept sobbingly over the water, and stridently a lighter, wilder peal sounded in symphony from the convent on the mountain side. Soon the notes of the organ and the voices of the chorists, swelled the music up in the midnight hymn, filling the whole atmosphere with solemn, swelling melody.

But not to these heavenly sounds did the ear of Eva O'Connor incline; far, nearer and clearer, from the wooded bank of the lake, came the wild notes of the harp heard that night before, and the same mournfully musical voice sang:

"Maiden, hush! the midnight hour  
Sounds from Conn's mossy tower;  
Bearded monks and sister nuns  
Hear the ear of Heaven's anvil.  
Bells are ringing,  
Organs are swelling,  
Let them chant their sin-born wall!  
But wouldst thou the future prove?  
Woe'st thou know the fate of love?  
Woe'st thou all the sorrows trace  
Of thyself and of thy race?  
Haste to weave the mystic spell!  
Royal daughter,  
Write the water  
Of the fairy's haunted well!"

"Oat! prince; let us go back! It is unearthly! It is unholy!" whispered Theresa, with chattering teeth, as the strain died away.

But her mistress sat like one rapt, gazing fixedly at the part of the shore whence the voice had proceeded.

After a pause the music sounded again, but this time no voice accompanied it. It was a wild, pleading sound, becoming lower and lower, dying away in the distance, and, as if decided by this, the princess started eagerly from her trance and bent forward.

"I will follow it. Now to the shore, Theresa. Haste! The bells have ceased, and we may miss it. I am unhappy. The sea, very unhappy. Better unravel at once this mystery. Do not speak! It is my fate, and I must yield to it. Be not afraid; no harm can reach the pure in heart. Haste, Theresa, haste! A terrible foreboding is upon me, and a fear seizes me that I shall be too late. Rather than that I will dare all danger."

The trembling, awe-stricken girl propelled the skiff to the shore, and they got out and pulled it up on the strand. The spot on which they landed was high and grassy, the glade stretching down to within a few yards of the bank. At a little distance the trickling of water was heard, telling where one of the mountain rills fell into the castle lake.

The bright moonlight shone on the gray trunks and silvery foliage of the outer trees, and darted in pale silver penillings into the leafy aisles, but in the farther depths all seemed black and frightsome.

The wind whispered softly among the trees, but above this, and the trickle of the stream, and the

faint, rolling chant, and the ripple of the lake that sounded on the beach like the distant babble of children, they heard the wild thrills of the harp, seemingly far, far before them in the gloomy depths of the forest, inviting them to follow.

"Come, Theresa," said the princess, taking her companion by the hand, and her own shook when she felt how cold and trembling it was. "Do not fear, dear girl! no harm will come to us. Heaven will protect us."

"Oh, mistress, why tempt its mercy?" whispered the girl, almost inaudibly.

"I cannot tell, Theresa; I cannot resist," said the princess, in a tone not much firmer than her attendant's. "I know—I feel that something dreadful is coming. The pale light is before me—there—there in the forest depths it glows to lead me on! Come, come, we linger; let us follow it!"

With trembling limbs and slow steps they entered the glade, their lengthened shadows going before them on the moonlit forest path like ghostly guides. The night wind fluttered the leaves and murmured among the gnarled boles of the trees, causing that strange sound which one seems to feel rather than hear, that oppressive hush, that noisy silence which so awes the night traveller in the woods— which seems like the whispering of giants above him, though through it the slightest unusual sound, the breaking of a twig, the falling of a leaf, is startlingly audible.

The two quaking girls stole slowly along, hand in hand, like the babes in the wood, starting at every extra gust, staring fearfully around, until they saw the reflections of their overstrained eyes dancing before them in fiery rings in the darkness.

They had got to the end of the moonlit path, their guiding shadows had been swallowed up in the general gloom, through which the nearest trunks were but dimly seen, and they passed, loth to leave the light for this doubtful darkness.

"Ah! Heaven's mercy!" suddenly gasped Theresa, clinging in affright to her trembling mistress, as a rustling sound broke through the forest whisper, and they were aware that something had lifted before them and was gone.

It was so sudden, so noiseless, so indistinct, that it looked less like the passing of a figure than the commotion of impalpable darkness itself. While their breathing was suspended, and the tremor still upon them, the notes of the harp sounded from the gloom with the constantly recurring strain:

"Haste to weave the mystic spell  
At the fairy's haunted well."

Eva, as if irresistibly drawn forward by the sound, tightened her clasp upon her companion's hand and hurried on with swift steps, going faster in the almost impenetrable gloom than she had done with the moonlight to guide and encourage her. And now, though they could see nothing, they felt that there was something—a breathing presence near them— nearer than the music seemed to be—leading them on.

The glade became narrower, less free from undergrowth, darker and more intricate. The chequered light that had occasionally winked overhead was no longer seen, the mournful gusts of wind were more frequent.

Occasionally the flutter of a frightened bird startled them, or the eyes of a rabbit gleamed through the gloom for an instant, then disappeared with a bounding crash. Then the ground became more uneven and ascended slightly. The murmur of waters fell upon their ears, and the air was damp and heavy, while the dripping of dew from leaf to leaf sounded like the patter of fairy feet rushing over the foliage.

Still, through all, they heard the guiding tinkle and felt the leading presence before them.

"We are entering the Fairy Glen, Theresa," whispered Eva. "There must approach light. We shall then see who guides us."

Theresa shuddered, but did not speak.

"I am sorry I forced you to come, Theresa."

"Oh, mistress, don't mind me," replied the girl, "I'm not afraid. But I was thinking that this fountain might rise and sweep us down the glen, and drown the castle, and fill the plain where all the soldiers are, as did the Boyne and Killarney and Lough Neagh, where the round towers and spires are buried in the white sands and the fishes play whirling with the weathercocks."

The princess made no remark on this fantastic fear, but pressed on more eagerly than ever, for the air became fresher than before, and the sound of falling water was distinctly heard. She knew by these signs that they were nearing the outer edge of the wood—that is, of the thicker portion of it.

The light once more flickered through the leafy canopy, but it was fitful, for the flying clouds made it come and go like the flames of the firefly. In one of these bright gleams they caught, in an open space before them, a sight that made their blood run cold and caused them both to cry aloud:

It was a dark figure, indistinctly seen—a white face

with gleaming eyes—and a snowy hand raised in the air as if beckoning them onwards.

A cloud passed over the moon, and the spectro disappeared like a vision seen by lightning.

"Oh, for the love of Heaven, Lady Eva, let us get back!" exclaimed Theresa, nearly sinking with terror. "It is the Lady of the Glen. They say she is never seen but an O'Connor dies!"

But the sight that sent fear to the heart of the maid seemed to endow the princess with new energy, and she dragged her trembling companion onward.

"You rave, child!" she said. "It is some sister returning from her work of mercy at the cottage. See where the moon shines on the convent bell. Below that lies the Fairy's Well. Haste, we will overtake her and ask her company."

They soon arrived at a comparatively open space, giving a fitfully seen vista, with the belfry and roof of the convent above the trees on one slope.

The wind was sweeping briskly down the glen, and the fall and ripple of the mountain stream came to them in hollow murmurs, the rustling whisper of the trees had deepened to a dismal "sough," and instead of steam-like drifts of summer cloud large masses of storm-wrack scudded across the sky.

No form, human or ghostly, was in view, and the far-spread scene of silent desolation seemed still more frightful than the darkness they had left.

The sound of the harp floated wildly down upon the breeze, and they were hastening on toward it when they were terrified by a loud growling, and a couple of great, savage animals tore madly through the bushes and sprang toward them with fiery eyes and glistering fangs.

With one agonized cry to Heaven for mercy, princess and maid threw their arms about each other and awaited death.

But, as if their cry for mercy had been answered, they heard a crashing of branches and a voice of thunder crying:

"Wo! hol! Back, Wolf-fang! Down, Sango!"

The animals crouched before their intended prey with a growl, and the terrified girls could see their red-tongued tongues and their hot breath condensing on the chilly air.

The next instant a man of wild appearance and herculean form, bareheaded and armed with a massive club, rushed from the wood.

He sprang at the dogs with a growl as savage as their own and sent them howling right and left, then, bowing reverentially to the women, he said, in a rough voice:

"Fear not, holy sisters, not a flock of froth shall stain your robes. I'll see you to Our Lady's House. I wonder me they let you come from castle or cot alone at such an hour. Wild beasts have no knowledge of holy persons, and the bloodhounds are only used to seeing hedge-bowmen and game thiefs. Shall we go?"

He had, evidently, from their hoods and cloaks, mistaken them for nuns from the convent, returning from attending to the wounded of the battle-field. The girls had stood still in their statue-like attitude of affright, but Theresa, recovering breath and voice, cried, in joyous tones:

"Heaven be praised, my Lady Eva, it is the king's forester, Black Murtaugh!"

At the sound of the name of the princess the man gave a start and cast himself on his knees, with his head bent at her feet and the hem of her canopy pressed to his lips.

"The forester?" she said.

"Yes; pardon me, my princess," he said, humbly.

"Who was it: know it was the O'Connor's Child here in the glen at midnight?"

"Rise, forester," she said, throwing back her hood. He arose and stood before her, gazing on her fair face with an expression of adoration on his wild features.

"I can trust you, forester?"

"Princess, you can till death—ay, and beyond it!" he answered, in a thrilling voice. "Not every child, my lady, can have the honour to be plucked from death by royal hands; but mine had that! Since then my soul is thine!"

The Princess Eva had plucked his drowning infant from the lake.

"Hush! that is sinful," she said, and Black Murtaugh dropped his head at the rebuke. "Listen, Theresa, there's the harp again! Forester, we go to the Fairy's Well. Wilt thou follow us?"

The man gave a frightened start, gazed at her, paused for an instant, and said:

"To death, my lady!"

They went on again, and the forester followed, with the great bloodhound slinking surlily at his heels. At the edge of a dark grove, above which glimmered the windows of Our Lady's House, Eva O'Connor paused, and said:

"You, forester, stay here. Do not approach unless you hear us call."



"I pray thee let me go, my lady," he said, appealingly.

"It cannot be," she said. "Stay here and keep thy bounds at peace. Let them not after us."

The last command was necessary, for the dogs, with low growlings, were peering into the darkness ahead.

"By'r Lady, princess," said the forester, "there is evil in the grove. I beg thee give me leave to let them slip and go before thee."

"No!" she answered, wilfully, as she heard the harp again. "Beat them back. Come, Theresa!"

"Oh, my noble mistress!" cried Theresa, "listen to him—let him come! She's never seen but an O'Connor dies!"

With an exclamation of impatience the wilful princess dropped her comrade's hand and started on alone.

The bloodhounds were about to bound forward, but Black Marthaug beat them back with a leathern thong, and Theresa hastened after her mistress, crying her name aloud.

Flitting rapidly onward, like two flying spectres, went princess and maid through the gloom of the grove, leaving behind them a grim group—the forester kneeling between the two eager dogs, with his great, bawny arms around their shaggy necks; holding them back, and his head stretched forth towards the grove as eagerly as theirs.

# CHAPTER XI.

The wine of life is drawn, and the more loes  
Is left this world to bring of.

The two women paused suddenly, for they imagined they heard a cry of pain and terror before them, followed by a dull thud like the fall of some heavy body on the sward.

The guiding harp ceased to sound, and they listened with quick-beating hearts and eager ears. The alarming cry was not repeated, and in a few moments the music recommenced.

"Is nothing but fancy or some forest animal," said the princess, going forward more slowly than before.

They heard the trickle of water that told them they were near to the fountain or well, for this was the babble of the little stream caused by its overflow. Then they paused at the foot of the activity before the low-browed opening of a dark cave that looked like the entrance to a burial vault.

It was an open space in which they stood, allowing a view of the night sky through the trees overhead, and, far above, the gray walls of Our Lady's House were seen in the intermittent moonlight.

Up this activity the eyes of the girls followed the sound of the music, and they started with suppressed cries as a tall form, in a long black robe, bearing a small harp, standing beneath the gibbet-like arms of a partially blasted oak, from which nearly all the foliage was gone.

The face of this figure was invisible in the gloom, although the outline was strongly defined against the gray walls of the convent. From this fact the astonished girls imagined all sorts of strange things, and the eccentric courage that had carried Eva to the spot deserted her.

Theresa had fallen back in affright at the first appearance of the apparition, and Eva was following her, walking backward, with her eyes still fixed on the object of terror, when the figure stayed her by an imperious motion of the hand and said, in a hollow, harsh voice:

"Child of O'Connor, stop and listen!"

"Speak—I listen!" said Eva, in tremulous accents.

"It is the hour of my mystery!" exclaimed the strange figure.

"Thou hast done well to come. I have waited and hungered for the time when the O'Connor's Child should seek the Fairy Glen at midnight to learn the mystery of the well. To the ears and eyes of the lily princess alone shall the well reveal the fortunes of her race."

The princess did not answer, but stood trembling before the dark mouth of the mysterious well, from which the little musical rivulet stole and crept away into the darkness.

The figure raised a hand to the oak above its head, and, pulling off a small twig with several leaves attached, threw it down and it fell at the feet of the princess.

"Royal maiden!" cried the figure, in a half-mocking tone, "receive the sceptre—the rod that rules the fate of the O'Connors, a sceptre greater than thy father's—the last green leaves upon the sacred oak."

"Oh, mistress, my dear mistress, do not touch it!" cried Theresa, with a shudder.

"Lift it!" commanded the deep voice, sternly.

The Princess Eva, as if compelled by this order, stooped and sought for the oak branch and lifted it. As she did so a gust of wind swept through the grove, and sounded in the dark little cave like a moan

of human agony that made Theresa retreat still farther from her mistress.

At the same time the mysterious figure above gave a laugh of triumph and struck the harp with bold hand, singing in a wild sort of chaunt:

"Wouldst thou prophecy evoke  
From the mystic cave,  
Strike the branch of sacred oak  
On the fountain's wave.  
Note if pale or bright it glows  
At the oak leaves' tips;  
List what music murmurs flow  
From the crystal lips."

"Sunbeams never pierce the depths  
Of the Fairy Well,  
Moonlight moonlight never sleeps  
In its darksome cell,  
Yet, in lines of mystic light,  
Read the future shown,  
Leads of sorrow and delight  
From its murmuring tone."

"Maiden, dip the leaflets in,  
Thou the fate canst prove  
Of thy royal house and kin—  
Of thy about love,  
If with silver-glancing gleams  
Bright the ripples shine,  
Chiming like the chimes of dreams,  
Joy to thee and thine."

"Blue show love and constancy,  
Yellow jealous spite,  
Green foretells mishap to thee  
And thy phantom knight;  
If it shine with crimson glare,  
And deep, gurgling flow,  
Love for ruin and despair,  
Bloodshed, hate, and woe."

"Who art thou, mysterious being? Why hast thou brought me hither?" said the princess as the voice ceased.

"Thine own curiosity brought thee hither," resumed the figure. "Thou dost seek to look into the future—to know whether thy love for the Falcon Knight shall prosper or not. Consult the oracle of the well. See, ere it be too late. Farewell!"

"Stay! Stay!" exclaimed Eva as the mysterious personage turned to go. "Thou speakest in hidden terms of the fate of my father's house. Tell me, does any danger threaten it? Shall evil arise from the late fight with the English?"

A long, wild laugh burst from the apparition, and echoed among the trees.

"Ay, ay!" it cried. "The war-drum shall soon be heard in the east, the Saxon bugles shall echo in the vales of Connaught."

"But—but," said Eva, in an agitated manner, "how will it go? Will the power of the O'Connor be overthrown?"

"When the voice of the dove shall affright the hearts of eagles then shall the glory of O'Connor fade, but not till then!"

"Why, that shall surely never be," said Eva O'Connor. "But I pray you answer me once more. Hark you mentioned—the Falcon Knight—what of him?"

"Danger and death surround him. The axe of the executioner is hanging o'er his head."

"The executioner!" gasped the princess. "Gracious Heaven forfend! For what cause?"

"I may not answer thee," said the dark personage, turning away once more; but the princess rushed to the foot of the height and clasped her hands appealingly.

"Oh, in mercy answer me!" she cried.

"No more."

"Oh, let me die ere that!" she sobbed, dropping on her knees. "Man, woman, spirit, whatsoever thou art, tell me but this: Is it true that thy appearance is the forerunner of the death of an O'Connor?"

"'Tis true!" came solemnly down the hill, and seemed to be repeated by a ghostly voice from the cave of the fountain.

"I am ready," said Eva, bowing her head as if for the death-stroke; "kill me now!"

A sardonic laugh was the only answer.

Looking up, she saw that the sable form had disappeared, and the next instant she caught a faint sound, as if proceeding from the bowels of the mountain:

"Maiden, haste if thou dost evoke  
Truth from out the cave,  
Strike the branch of sacred oak  
On the fountain's wave!"

"I will do it!" she cried, seizing a twig. "Heaven protect me! I will know the worst at once."

"Ah, my dear, dear mistress! My mistress!" exclaimed the girl; but her cry was unheeded, for Eva O'Connor rushed to the dark mouth of the cave and knelt upon the stone step beneath which the overflow of the fountain rippled.

"Blessed Virgin!" she said, with raised hands, "forgive me if I sin!"

With suspended breath she lowered the branch to touch the water, but suddenly a thrill of horror shot through her frame, and her hand was suspended over the magical water as though she had been turned to stone

A groan like the moaning of the dead came from the darkness without, and echoed dismally in the cave.

"Great Heaven! What was that?" she gasped.

"The powers be good to us, my mistress!" cried the frightened girl. "The place is unholy. Let us fly from it."

"Hush! Hark!"

"Strike the branch of sacred oak  
On the fountain's wave."

"I am commanded; I obey!" exclaimed the princess, in an awe-stricken whisper, and with a quick hand she smote the well with the branch.

Suddenly a pale yellow light, deepening into gold, shone upon the glittering surface of the water, sparkled on the damp walls and roof of the cave, and lit the shells at the bottom of the limpid well.

"Ah, woe is me!" cried the princess, wailingly.

"Is such sad omen mine?"

"What is it, my princess?" asked the girl, from without.

"Alas, child, the fountain is against me. It is the yellow light of spite and jealousy. The cave is golden-hued, and the running water hisses like serpents."

But, even as she looked, the yellow light gradually paled away until its warmth of colour was gone, and it changed into a continually deepening green, that gave a deadly look to the dark water below and shone dimly off the walls.

Eva O'Connor dropped her head in her hands and sobbed aloud.

"How is it now, my princess? What makes thee weep?" cried Theresa.

"Ah, miserable that I am!" sobbed Eva. "It is the light of danger and mishap. The waters are as green as the leaves of the oak, and sound like the threatening of a thunderstorm. Ha! They brighten! Joy, Theresa, joy!"

"What is it, mistress?"

"'Tis happiness! 'Tis peace!" she cried, joyfully.

"'Tis the blue light of love and constancy, and the voice of the waters is like the cooing of the cushat! Good powers, accept a maiden's thanks! What care I for jealousy or spite or danger when love outlives them all? Ah! Mercy! That groan again?"

The groan, as before, sounded dismally from the darkness, and echoed in the cave, and, not gradually as before, but suddenly as the lightning's flare, the blue tint disappeared and a blinding crimson flood of light filled the cave, turning the water to blood, and giving the wet walls the appearance of red-hot iron.

"Ah! Mercy, mercy, Heaven!" exclaimed the princess, wildly shrinking back, and allowing the lurid blaze to stream-out past her into the night.

"Pity! Our Lady, pity!"

She heard the voice of Theresa calling from the outer darkness:

"Oh, mistress! Princess!"

But she exclaimed, in a wild, wailing voice:

"It is the bale-light of ruin and despair—of bloodshed, madness, and woe!"

"Oh, mistress, mistress!" cried the girl, in a voice of affright.

"Hark!" cried the princess. "Behold the horrid waters! They look like blood and gurgles—like the breathing of the dying."

"Alas, alas! my mistress!" exclaimed the girl, rushing up and catching the princess by the arm. "The gurgling comes not from the water! It is indeed the breathing of the dying. Hark!"

The princess sprang up and listened.

They heard a rustling of withered leaves in the darkness by the edge of the rivulet, followed by a heart-chilling groan of human anguish.

Eva O'Connor started forward with a cry.

"Speak!" she exclaimed. "In Heaven's name who are you?"

A very feeble moan and the single word "Eva,"

gasped painfully, fell upon their ears.

With a cry of frightened anticipation the princess

rushed into the gloom, followed by Theresa.

At only a few feet from the cave she dashed her

foot against a soft body, and a moan of pain followed.

She stooped, and her hands fell upon a human

figure, and a cold, feeble hand endeavoured to grasp

her, but sank lifeless.

It was pitchy dark, but she felt that the body was

lying partly in the running stream, and the clammy

touch of warm-flowing blood caused her to shudder.

"Quick, Theresa!" she cried, hoarsely. "It is

some one treacherously done to death. Come, help

me to lift him from the water. Oh, sir, sir, for the

love of Heaven speak! Who are you?"

A low moan was the only answer.

With a great, crushing fear at her heart she cried,

exultingly:

"Bear him to the light—that dreadful light!"

The two half-carried, half dragged the dripping,

bleeding form toward the lurid glare at the mouth of



[THE FAIRY'S WELL.]

the cave, but ere they had approached near enough to see the object of their solicitude the light suddenly disappeared, and they were left in total darkness with their frightful charge.

"Theresa! Theresa! shout aloud for the forester!" cried the princess, raising her own voice to its highest pitch. "Help! ho! help! I fear 'tis he. Moran! Connocht Moran!" she called, bending in the gloom over the prostrate form. Speak to me, Moran, if 'tis thou!"

The wounded man made a movement, and she raised his head upon her bosom to enable him to speak. There was a struggle for utterance, but only the word "Eva" came indistinctly forth, and the head fell from her grasp upon the sward with a heavy thud and a gurgling, rattling sound. Then all was still.

"'Tis he! Great Heaven, 'tis he!" cried the princess, throwing herself on the lifeless form with shrieks so wild that the forest birds started from their cover and the rooks in the convent caves left their nests in affright and flew chattering above the roof.

At this moment, with great bounds and flashing eyes and snorting breath, the two bloodhounds, Wolf-fang and Sango, sprang through the darkness, followed by the forester with heavy tramp, calling aloud to restrain and direct them and encourage the girls.

The dogs scented the blood and sprang toward it, while the girls screamed in terror.

"Down, Wolf-fang! Back, Sango!" vociferated the forester, bounding forward directed by the cries. "Speak! speak! ladies! Where are you? What has happened?"

"Oh, forester, keep back the dogs. Here's one been murdered!"

"Murdered? Who? By whom?"

"'Tis he, forester, 'tis he!" cried the princess, wildly. "'Tis Connocht Moran, the Falcon Knight!"

"Grace forbid!" exclaimed the forester. "The Falcon Knight! It is impossible! Oh, for a torch. Keep heart, my lady. 'Tis a mistake. The light will soon be here. What, oh! Lights! lights! Help! oh! Ha! they are moving at Our Lady's House!"

Sure enough from window to window of the convent the lights were flashing, and soon many dark figures bearing torches were clambering cautiously down the steep towards the Fairy's Well.

"It cannot be the Falcon Knight, my princess," said Black Murtough, consolingly, to Eva. "He has gone away. Who would injure him? He was beloved of all. Who would murder him?"

"I know not—I know not!" she gasped. "Oh,

Heaven, keep off that thought! It is too, too horrible!"

"What, royal lady?"

"Conrad! my brother Conrad! They quarrelled—they parted in anger!"

"Ah! my lady, do not wrong thy brother," said the forester, humbly. "My head on't, he could not do such deed!"

"'Tis little matter who!" exclaimed Eva, hysterically, embracing the lifeless form. "He's gone for ever—the truest man and the most gallant knight that ever bore a pennon. Ah, love of mine! let me embrace thee still, even though it be the last! Yet, no, no, no! They'll part us now no more! Mine! mine! mine! What care I for rank—'tis all vanity! Let them live in their small selfishness. For us, why let the bale-light shine. My own—my love—king, father, brothers, shall never part us more! Lo, this blood-sealed kiss shall be my pledge."

Then she fell back upon the lifeless form, and pressed her lips repeatedly to the blood-stained face, and caressed the long, flowing hair.

"Never more, *ma coulin*, shall thy raven locks float in the breeze of battle! Never more shall thine eye beam with love or strike terror to the heart of the foemen. Thou art gone, my falcon—for ever—for ever—for ever."

Theresa and the forester attempted to console her, and the latter pointed to the lights winding nearer and nearer down the mountain.

"See, my good mistress, there come the lights. Be patient, for surely thou art in error."

"Keep them away!" she cried. "I want no lights since the light of his glance is quenched. Leave me in the blackness that suits my grief! They will but strive to part me from him. Away, away! I have seen the light—the blue light—that assured me of his truth."

The forester's attention was attracted by the whining and growling of the dogs.

They had tracked the blood to the spot where the girls had discovered the dying man, and were growling savagely.

Black Murtough sprang toward them, and at the sound of his step the animals started off rapidly, with their noses to the ground.

"A scent, a scent, my princess! We'll have the murderer of the knight!" cried the forester, dashing away after his trusty hounds.

The next moment the people from the convent, nuns and porters, thronged down the slope with torches.

At the same time another large party, similarly furnished, and led by Desmond, Brazil and Bruce, rushed through the leafy aisles.

This was the party of volunteers who had started out to overtake Connocht Moran.

The princess, dazzled by the sudden flood of light, and half blinded by her tears, looked up and recognized the faces and voices of her brothers.

"What—what is the matter?" they asked, with one voice.

"Ha! See here! Look at this sight, my brothers! See the work of pride!" she cried, frantically. "Come, gaze upon the victim of an assassin prince!"

They rushed forward, but a cry of astonishment and horror burst from nuns and knights as the light of the torches fell upon the little group.

"Merciful Heaven!" cried Brazil and Desmond in the same breath, throwing themselves on their knees beside the prostrate form. "Can it be possible?—Conrad!"

With a scream of horror Eva O'Connor drew back and gazed at the form upon her lap.

There, with the crimson mantle blackened and stained with mud and water, his beautiful features blood splashed and ghastly, his long, raven locks clotted with gore, and his once fiery eyes staring glassily upward, lay Conrad O'Connor!"

"My brother!" cried the princess, pushing back the clustering locks from the brow. "Oh, my brother—my poor brother—how I have wronged thee!"

Desmond and Brazil tore open the garments of the murdered man and pressed their hands upon his heart, but life was extinct—the body was already cold.

Even while the tears of grief arose to his eyes Desmond demanded an explanation of this dreadful scene—how he came to find his sister in the forest at such an hour lamenting over her murdered brother.

The agitated answers of the princess and maid were interrupted by the yelp of dogs at a distance, followed by loud cries of human agony.

"Haste, away with you, brothers! gentlemen! It is the forester and the bloodhounds. They are on the track of the murderer! Away! secure him quickly!"

"Follow! Follow!" cried Desmond, savagely, springing towards the wood. "Bring torches! Come!"

As the prince entered the thicket the forester and his bloodhounds dashed past him towards the lights, dragging a human form between them, for the dogs had hold of it as well as the man.

"The murderer, my lords—the assassin!" cried the forester, breathlessly, as he threw the form face downward on the sod, where it lay quite motionless.

(To be continued.)





[BINDING THE SERPENT.]

# MARIGOLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Image in the Heart," "Sweet Eglantine,"  
"The Three Passions," &c., &c.

## CHAPTER XLV.

Omya: Alas! you know me not.

Zara: Not who thou art?

But what this last ingratitude declares,  
This growling baseness. Thou say'st true, I know  
Thee not, for what thou art yet wants a name;  
But something so unworthy and so vile  
That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost  
Than all the malice of my other fate. Congress.

The telegram which had thrown Ralph into such a state of consternation had come from Bath, and had been sent by Miss Fanny Proctor to Ralph Anglesey at Clifton.

It said, simply:

"Come to me at once or I shall be very ill. If you do not come to-day I shall come to you to-morrow."

Here was a new complication.

Ralph had solemnly promised Carmen that he would not see Miss Proctor again, but would it not be best to break his word rather than allow her to come to Mr. Anglesey's house, where everybody would see her?

At present only Carmen knew his secret, and if he could so talk to Miss Proctor as to induce her to give him back his plighted faith all would be well.

It was a heart-breaking task however, and he felt that he would rather lose ten thousand pounds than go through the interview which seemed unavoidable.

Ralph was essentially a weak-minded man. What he ought to have done was to go to Carmen with the telegram in his hand, and say:

"You see she will not leave me alone. She is coming here. Will you see her with me, and then she will know that it is all over between us?"

But he resolved to act in a very different manner.

He summoned all his fortitude to his aid, and, calling Rouse, told him to inform the family that he was suddenly called away on business which would prevent his appearing at dinner. He should be home in the evening, or at the latest by an early train in the morning.

Then he walked to the railway station, took a return ticket from Bristol to Bath, and prepared himself for the interview with Miss Proctor.

The fact was that his heart was divided between Carmen and Fanny.

When he was with Carmen he was her slave; but

no sooner did he see Fanny than all his love came back for her.

To see her was the rashest thing that he could have done, but he resolved to speak plainly to her and give her to understand that she could never be his wife.

This was the determination with which he started. Yet as he reached Bath his feelings underwent a change, and he admitted to himself that Fanny had always been and still was very dear to him.

The most disagreeable position—the most ruinous position—that a man can place himself in is to love two women at once.

Always be off with the old love before you are on with the new is a saying which must have been invented by one who had been in a similar dilemma to that in which Ralph found himself.

Fanny Proctor was a farmer's daughter. She was an orphan, and resided with her uncle, Mr. Adam Reeves, a widower, at a small farm a little way out of Bath.

While fishing one day in the river Avon Ralph had met Fanny, and the acquaintance, which had commenced by some trivial question, ripened into intimacy when he had paid a few visits to the farm.

His fishing excursions became more frequent, and he always contrived to go to the farm either for a draught of beer or a cup of tea with some eggs and bacon.

At last he took lodgings at the farm, and it was about twelve months after he had first known Fanny that he became engaged to her.

Adam Reeves did not know his lodger's high position at Bristol. He thought him a clerk in a mercantile house, and, as Fanny liked him, he did not throw any obstacle in the way of their union.

Had not Captain Anglesey been perpetually talking of Mercedes, the daughter of his old and valued friend, Marshal Chabot, and declaring that it was the dearest wish of his heart that Ralph and Mercedes should be united, Ralph would long ago have made his engagement known.

But he feared to offend his guardian.

So the time slipped by happily enough—Ralph, like all weak men, being fond of procrastination and of a vacillating nature.

He never expected to see Mercedes, and when he returned to Clifton after a visit to the farm, and saw the supposed Mercedes, the agitation he displayed on that occasion can be readily understood.

It was a great shock to him.

When he reached Bath after receiving Fanny's telegram he quitted the town and walked rapidly in the direction of the farm.

As he proceeded the houses grew few and far be-

tween, and at last he reached the fringe of large trees which grew at the bottom of the garden.

Through the interstices of the thick leaves he saw the red-tiled roof of the farmhouse.

A thread of blue smoke creeping from the chimney indicated that there was some one at home.

When he had reached the little gate which led through the garden to the house Ralph was obliged to stop, the emotion which attacked him compelled him to sit down for a brief space on the bank of green turf by the side of the pathway.

He felt very weak, and his head became as dizzy as an old man's after any unaccustomed exertion and he seemed like one attacked with vertigo.

His heart beat as if it would burst from his breast, and then on the other hand it stopped suddenly as if not a drop of blood flowed in the young man's veins.

Summoning up all his resolution and calling every atom of courage he had to his aid, he got up and went on, determining to tell Fanny exactly how he was situated.

He would throw himself on her mercy.

Either he would embrace the most perfect happiness or the most unutterable misery.

If she told him that it was his duty to marry Carmen, and that she would not stand in his way, he would do so.

If, on the contrary, she held him by his word, he would sacrifice all for her and make her his wife, even if Mr. Anglesey refused to see him again and would not give him another shilling.

He was like a weather-cock; the least breath of wind could turn him one way or the other.

Such it is to be a man who has no strength of mind—no will of his own.

A few minutes sufficed for him to reach the end of the garden, after passing the rustic gate.

He rested for a moment at the porch, the yellow September sun cast his rays over the old apple trees and the velvet carpet of the little lawn where he had so often sat with Fanny.

The red brick farmhouse seemed to smile in this setting of trees and grass and sun.

Fowls and ducks in the adjoining yard gave life and motion to the solitude of the garden, and on the side of an open window sat a pet cat, half yellow, half white, sunning itself, partly hidden by the thick intermingled jasmine and clematis which ran up the side of the house.

He had seen it all before. Everything was in its place. Nothing had changed since he was there last.

Instead of going into the house an instinct told him to walk to the end of the lawn where a pigeon-house stood, near which was a rustic seat under an oak.

This used to be a favourite spot of Fanny's, and, as he expected, he found her sitting there.

But not as formerly. If the house and its surroundings were not changed, she was.

It had been her custom to bring her work out here, and while she worked she sang as blithely as a bird in May.

Instead of working and singing, she was sitting silent and sad, her head hanging down and her hands clasped in a melancholy manner.

Perhaps she was praying—*who shall say?*—praying for the man who had proved false to her—praying that he might be forgiven as she had forgiven him for his perfidy.

She had been accustomed to wear a white muslin dress in summer, but now she was clad in sombre black. There were no flowers in her hair, which was rough and dishevelled, as if she had lost all pride in her personal appearance—a very dangerous symptom in women.

Her cheeks were a little attenuated and transparently white, and her lowered eyes seemed swollen by weeping.

"Fanny," he exclaimed as he appeared before her, "it is I. You wait for me and I am here."

She raised her head, she saw him, and bounded forward with her eyes flashed strangely. She uttered one of those cries which come from the soul and threw herself upon Ralph's breast, casting her two arms round his neck while she said, in a broken voice:

"At last. You have come at last!"

"Fanny," he replied, "do you love me still?"

Looking at him with a sublime simplicity so different from the theatrical manner of Carmen, she answered:

"Do women love twice in their lives?"

"Did you expect me?"

"I would have waited for you till I died. Have I not promised to be your wife, Ralph? Why should I not expect to see you again?"

"But I wrote to you. I told you that I gave you back your heart."

"Well, I did not accept it. You seemed to tell me that unless a miracle happened I should never see you again. I believed in this miracle. I hoped and trusted that my Maker would work this miracle in my behalf, and He has done so. He has heard my prayer."

"I am the most miserable man in the world," replied Ralph. "My heart is broken. You are an angel, Fanny, and I deserve—"

"Hush!" she answered, "I have no wings, therefore I cannot be an angel. Love blinds you to my faults. But tell me what has happened to separate us. Be candid with me. If I knew that I must not despise you I could brave my lot better. I can love you still even if you are another's, but if I had occasion to despise you I should die."

"I have a great deal to tell you," he said. "Let me begin at the commencement. Years ago I was a poor boy, with no prospects in the future. Then it was that my kind friend Mr. Anglesey took me by the hand. He adopted me. My father was a distant relation of his."

"You ought to love him, honour him, obey him for his goodness," exclaimed Fanny.

"I have done so, to the best of my poor ability," he continued. "Mr. Anglesey is the richest man in Bristol—in fact, he is one of the wealthiest men in England, and that is saying a great deal. I am to be his heir. I have seen his will, and I shall inherit his millions. At present I have the command of any sum of money I choose to ask for."

"I thought you were poor. You did not tell me you were rich."

"Would you have loved me more?"

"That would be impossible," she answered, simply. "I could not adore you under any circumstances more than I do at present. Was I cold when I thought you a poor, struggling, hard-working merchant's clerk, who spent his few holidays in the innocent pastime of fishing?"

"Oh, no. You were always the same, Fanny," he replied. "Well, you must know that Mr. Anglesey has not always been rich and prosperous, there are dark passages in his life. He has been under a cloud, all owing to his love for a woman. Then when he wanted a friend he found one in Wilfred Marshall."

"I will pray for him. This Wilfred Marshall claims my gratitude, because he was kind to your benefactor when he wanted a friend," answered Fanny.

"Wilfred Marshall is dead, but he has a daughter, and it was his wish and is my guardian's—that—that—oh, Fanny, dear, dear, Fanny, how can I find words to tell you?"

Fanny became pale, almost rigid; all the blood left her cheeks and her fingers twitched nervously. But there was a dormant heroism in the brave girl which prevented her from fainting or otherwise giving way.

"I know what you would tell me," she exclaimed.

"You need not worry yourself for words. Mr. An-

glesey, who is your benefactor, wishes you to marry this girl, the daughter of Wilfred Marshall, who was your benefactor's friend in the hour of trouble. Is it not so?"

"It is."

"His wish in fact amounts to a command?"

"It does."

"And you have come here to-day, dear Ralph, to ask me what you ought to do?" she continued.

"I have. Whichever way you decide I will be guided by you. I throw myself on your mercy. If you say to me that I am bound to you by ties which cannot be cast then I will acquiesce in your decision. I will marry you at once. I will cast guardian and benefactor, Mercedes, and all my future prospects to the winds, thinking myself happy to be your husband, feeling that there will be more happiness and contentment in this charming solitude and this sweet poverty than in the gilded halls that Mr. Anglesey's money can provide for us."

"Is her name Mercedes?" asked Fanny, thoughtfully.

"Yes."

"A pretty name," she went on. "Is she pretty and accomplished?"

"I should not call her pretty, her beauty is not like yours, Fanny. It is magnetic and commanding, it is queen-like. As for accomplishments, she can sing and play. Her voice is beautiful. She speaks French, and that is all."

"She is superior being. But it is a consolation to me, Ralph, that I possess your love. She may have your hand but she will never have your heart," said the young girl.

"I will be guided by you, dearest. Tell me what I ought to do," he continued.

"I will tell you more than that. I will tell you what you shall do," she exclaimed, with a sublime abstraction of self. "You shall marry this woman, Ralph. It is your duty. I love you far, far too well to stand in your way. You shall marry her, I say, and I—"

She could say no more.

Her fortitude gave way, and, burying her face in her hands, she burst into a flood of bitter, blinding tears.

"Fanny, Fanny," he cried, trying to console her. At this juncture a dark form appeared under the tree where they were standing, and a harsh, cold voice exclaimed:

"Good-morning, Mr. Anglesey."

Ralph turned round and was confronted by Adam Reeves, the uncle of the poor orphan who had just broken off the relations that had existed between them.

#### CHAPTER XLVI.

Prince Henry: I cannot sleep, my torrid brain Calls up the vanished past again, And throws its misty splendours deep Into the pallid realms of sleep! *Longfellow.*

MR. REEVES gave a glance at Fanny, and, seeing the state of agony she was in, told her gently to go indoors.

She rose in obedience to his words, and said to Ralph:

"Good-bye for ever."

His heart was too full of emotion to allow him to answer.

"Not one word before we part?" she continued.

"Heaven bless you, Fanny," he said. "I will try to—fight against fate. You have behaved nobly. I will only say one thing to you, and that is—hope."

"You bid me hope?" she cried, her eyes brightening.

"I do. I can say no more at present."

The poor girl left him and slowly walked towards the house, her sobs being distinctly audible.

"You might have spared her this," exclaimed Adam Reeves, sternly.

"My dear sir, you do not know the circumstances," replied Ralph.

"Nor do I want to know them."

"Allow me to explain. Do not condemn me unheard. That is not fair. Perhaps I shall be able to convince you that—"

"I will hear none of your special pleadings," interrupted Adam Reeves, a big, burly man with an honest, open, sunburnt face. "What can you tell me? I have seen your letters to the girl, and, as if that was not enough, you come here boldly to tell her to her face you cannot marry her."

"She sent for me."

"No matter. Did you not promise to make her your wife?" said Reeves.

"I did."

"You made her love you. You won her affections, which no man had ever done before, and I, like a blind idiot, trusted you."

"Will you listen to me?" urged Ralph.

"No, I will not, and why I don't kick you like a cur from my door I don't know," vociferated the honest farmer.

"Because, my dear friend, you feel that you would be treating me wrongly. Ask your niece. She will

tell you how and why our engagement is broken off," answered Ralph.

"I care for no reason. What is argument to me?" replied Adam Reeves. "I have heard a lawyer in court prove the worst cause the better one, and get off as big a rascal as was ever transported. What I deal with is facts. Did you or did you not promise to marry Fanny?"

"Unfortunately I did."

"For her it is unfortunate that she ever saw such a fellow as you. When I was young people used to have different ideas of honour. Hang me if I can understand it."

"But if you would listen to me, my dear sir—"

"I tell you I won't," replied the farmer, bluntly. "I'm rough and ready and don't want any fuss. The girl's dying with love for you. What there is in you to fancy I can't see. She's met many a lad that to my mind would have suited her a sight better, and you only a poor clerk—a poverty-stricken, scribbling fellow in Bristol. If you were not a man of straw bother me if I wouldn't have a shot at you in a court of law—by George I would."

"If you want money," began Ralph again, but Adam Reeves would not let him get a word in edgewise.

"Want money!" he repeated, scornfully. "What money have you got?"

"More perhaps than you think. If you want five thousand pounds you can have it," replied Ralph, eagerly.

"I don't want a halfpenny. Think Heaven the farm's a good one, and the landlord is easy. I've got it on a lease, and I know how to work it. Money wouldn't make me happy, and it wouldn't mend that poor girl's broken heart, that's what I'm thinking of. No, if I loved you as law it would be to expose you, and show you up to your friends if you have any, not to make money out of you."

He laughed in a half-scoffing, half-angry manner and went on:

"Follows like you ought to be exposed. You come here and made love to my niece—that's the point, isn't it? Well, you've won her affections, and come here now to tell us coolly that it is all broken off."

"With her permission," put in Ralph.

"That's no matt'r. You're a scoundrel! I've said it, and if you like to hit me for it I'm ready, old man as I am."

"You will not hear reason," said Ralph, in despair.

"Yes, I will, but there is no reason in you. Get out of my sight! I've got a hoe in my hand and might be tempted to hit you, which perhaps I should be sorry for afterwards. Go away!—you're like a blight on the corn! You've ruined the happiness of my little home!"

Ralph hesitated.

"Be off, I tell you, if you value a whole head," continued Adam Reeves. "I won't answer for myself if you stand there aggravating me."

Ralph, with his head bent down, sadly walked away.

The farmer's taunts sank deep into his heart, and at that moment he suffered more than he had believed he ever could endure.

"Villain!—scoundrel!—perjurer!" shouted the farmer after him. "Do you hear that? Think of it, my lad, let it make music in your ears all your life long. Go along—go quickly, or I'll send some of my boys to duck you in the fish-pond—villain and scoundrel! that's what I called you."

It was a terrible moment for Ralph, but he staggered out of the pretty little garden that he used to love so well, and wandered down the banks of the Avon in a dazed sort of manner.

At last he reached the railway station and finally got home.

He was in time for dinner, but he could not eat, and pleading a headache he went straight to bed.

That night the mind of the unhappy young man was rent by conflicting emotions. He had sacrificed his darling Fanny in obedience to the dictates of his conscience and with her sanction. He was doomed to marry a woman he did not care for, and could he expect happiness in the future?

It was a struggle between duty and affection and duty won.

We cannot blame him. He acted according to the standard of morality established by society, and the result was misery.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.

How many feel this very moment death And all the sad varieties of pain? *Thompson.*

It was nearly eleven o'clock—a fine rain had been falling all the evening which made the narrow streets of Bristol muddily and disagreeable. Few people were abroad, and those whose business kept them out hurried along under umbrellas or with their coats closely buttoned up.

In a small street reeking with evil odours running out on the quay but one shop was open, and



that was a tobacco-shop, kept by a young and buxom widow, to whom the amorous Izard was paying his attentions.

He had returned from his quest of the gipsy queen, whom in one week's time he had found with all her tribe encamped in the Clifton Woods.

This was good news for him, and he felt sure that he had earned the thousand pounds' reward which Mr. Anglesey had offered for her discovery.

He reached Bristol late in the evening, and after depositing his carpet bag at his lodgings he determined to go and see the object of his affections, for in his shop he could smoke a pipe, drink his glass of grog, and make love in his own peculiar fashion.

The widow received him with more than her usual kindness; for Izard seemed well off, held a good situation and appeared to be a desirable husband for one who was not at all averse to plunging a second time into matrimony.

While the gipsy was pouring honeyed phrases into the widow's ear four men, attired in the garb of sailors, placed themselves in an angle formed by a neighbouring house.

It was evident that they were in ambush, they made not the slightest movement, nor did they utter a word.

An hour elapsed, and as midnight sounded the widow rubbed her eyes as if she was sleepy, and Izard, knowing the signal well, rose to take his departure.

With a sigh he presented the object of his affections with a valuable ring, which he had stolen from Carmen's dressing-table, and, wishing her good-night in a tender voice, sallied into the street humming an air.

The widow blew him a kiss from the tips of her fingers and closed the door.

Immediately afterwards a low whistle was heard, and the four men whom we have previously mentioned threw themselves upon him with noiseless celerity.

The leader in a low voice commanded him as he valued his life not to utter a word.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, in a voice which trembled with terror, "for Heaven's sake don't kill me! I am a poor man—my watch and a few pounds in my pocket are all I possess in the world. Take them and let me go. Search me, gentlemen, and you will find I have spoken the truth."

He would have continued to talk for a much longer time, but the barrel of a pistol was placed, cold and chilling, against his ear, and a voice exclaimed:

"One word more and you are a dead man!"

The gipsy was silent and his limbs trembled convulsively.

In a moment he was hurried across the road to the edge of the quay by his captors.

"Are they going to drown me?" Izard asked himself, while big drops of perspiration fell from his forehead, and groans burst involuntarily from him.

The pistol again sought his ear, and a voice said: "Silence."

It was high water, and the tide nearly reached the top of the quay.

A boat was lying hard by, fastened by a rope to an iron ring in the wall, and manned by two sailors.

Not a word was exchanged between the captors of Izard and those in the boat. The gipsy was lifted by the arm and bundled rudely into the small craft, followed immediately by the four men, who, sitting the oars, began to row down the river.

Izard lay like a log at the bottom of the boat, and gave no other sign of life than that afforded by his deep sighs and groans.

For half an hour the oars rose and fell in the rowlocks, and the time seemed an age to the miserable captive, but at last they reached and ran alongside of a handsome merchant vessel, which was lying at anchor.

Forced to rise Izard was dragged up a rope ladder and placed on the deck of the ship. He was not kept here long, for his captors hurried him down the companion ladder and introduced him to the officers' cabin.

A light swung from the ceiling, which at first dazzled the eyes of the gipsy, but as he became accustomed to the glare he looked around him.

A species of vertigo seized him as his eye fell upon two men, who sat at the head of a table as if they were judges, and he the culprit whom it was their duty to try.

The expression of the coward's face would have been ludicrous if it had not been so pitiable.

His limbs trembled under him, he was obliged to grasp the back of a chair to prevent himself from falling, and his large, sunken-like eyes almost started from his head.

He had cause to fear however.

The two men into whose presence he had been so unceremoniously and mysteriously introduced were Arthur Everton and Quirino.

"Pardon, pardon," he cried, in a piteous voice, as he fell on his knees and clasped his hands together. "Have mercy up—me, in Heaven's name."

"Silence. Your life is in your own hands," replied Quirino.

Somewhat relieved by the words, Izard rose and said:

"Am I dreaming? Is it really you, Mr. Everton, and you, my dear, good friend Quirino? Will you condescend to explain this mystery to me, for by my word of honour, I am like a man who has just had a bad dream?"

After the first shock was over the fellow's courage began to revive, and he tried to persuade himself that no harm was meant him.

"The story is a very simple one," said Quirino.

"I found that my shot had not killed Mr. Everton, and feeling, when my passion was over, that I had no moral or legal right to kill him, I did all that lay in my power to revive him; which I was fortunate enough to succeed in doing."

"It was a miracle though that I escaped," said Arthur Everton.

"My dear brother-in-law, allow me to congratulate you," replied Izard, with his usual impudence.

"Scoundrel," replied Arthur Everton. "I wonder you dare to look me in the face since the rascally trick you played me."

"Ah! poor Carmen!" said Izard, forcing a tear into his eye. "Had she lived she would have been Lady Kimbolton. Your poor father is dead. You have his title, and as you were legally married to Carmen you could not deprive her of your title."

"Be silent, I say," continued Quirino; "listen to me and speak only when you are spoken to. We have heard of Lord Kimbolton's death. That is no news. Hear my story first."

Izard was dumb.

"When my friend was well enough to travel," continued Quirino, "we embarked on board this ship, which I had bought, to go all over the world if necessary in pursuit of you and your sister. We had heard that the 'Marigold' in which you and your sister found a passage, was lost, none being saved but Miss Mercedes Marshall Chabot. I however insisted that you were not born to be drowned, and that we should find you."

"You were right so far," replied Izard; "though I wish your instinct had led you to the North Pole to look for me instead of to Bristol."

Quirino displayed a pistol, and, handling it restlessly, exclaimed:

"If you venture to interrupt me again I will break one of your arms with a bullet. How dare you place yourself upon a footing of familiarity with this gentleman and me? Are you not a rogue and a vagabond? Did I not tell you this was my ship? Consequently you are in my power; you are my prisoner. Answer my questions truthfully, or, by heaven, I would no more hesitate to kill you than I would to crush a beetle."

Izard began to tremble again.

There was something menacing in Quirino's tone, and he could find no signs of help or sympathy in the stony or impassive countenance of Arthur Everton, now Lord Kimbolton.

"I fancied that you would, if saved, make for Bristol," continued Quirino. "Nor was I mistaken. I soon found traces of you, and, taking my measures accordingly, you were seized to-night at your favourite tobacco-shop and brought by my orders on board this ship, which you will never quit alive if you have the hardihood to trifle with me."

Izard protested in the most energetic terms that he had not the slightest intention of doing anything of the sort, and that he would, with the utmost pleasure, reply humbly to any questions Quirino might like to put to him.

"We shall see," answered Quirino. "In the first place where is Carmen?"

"Surely you know that my unhappy sister went down in the 'Marigold'?" he answered. "I was rejoiced in one sense, for it put an end to her sufferings, poor creature. She never held up her head after I told her that you were dead, my lord. She loved you so tenderly. What a wife she would have made!"

"Then only two persons escaped—yourself and Miss Mercedes?"

"No one else. Not a soul; as I am standing here before you," replied Izard.

"You are positive of that?" continued Quirino.

"If it was the last word I had to speak," replied Izard, solemnly.

Quirino put a whistle to his lips and blew it shrilly.

The mate entered in obedience to the signal.

"Your pleasure, captain?" he said.

"Run a rope with a noose at the end of it to the yard-arm," replied Quirino.

The mate started and Quirino continued:

"An execution will take place in five minutes. This fellow is anxious to be hanged. When all is in readiness return."

The mate saluted and went away.

The effect of this announcement upon Izard was to throw him into a state of violent terror.

"Mercy, my lord," he exclaimed, throwing him-

self at Arthur's feet. "At least I am your brother-in-law. You will not murder a relation in cold blood."

"I should only be too glad to get rid of the relationship which you and your precious sister forced upon me," replied Arthur. "Say your prayers. You have no time to lose; minutes pass quickly."

Izard's teeth chattered, and a rigidity like that of death itself seized upon his limbs.

"I will not die," he said. "I am not prepared. What right have you to kill me? It is horrible! Have you no mercy?"

"If you speak the truth your life will be spared. You have chosen to tell a falsehood, and therefore you sign your own death warrant."

"I have told the truth. Carmen is dead. She was drowned at sea when the 'Marigold' was wrecked," persisted the gipsy, knowing that if he spoke the truth his sister's plans would be ruined.

The mate re-entered and announced that the preparations for the execution were made.

"Will you speak?" asked Quirino.

Izard was silent.

"Take him away, and hang him to the yard-arm," said Arthur Everton.

The gipsy's terror increased as the mate rudely seized his arm and forced him to rise, dragging him to the door.

"Spare me, spare me!" he suddenly exclaimed. "I have not told the truth. I admit it. Spare my life and I will confess all."

At a sign from Quirino the mate relinquished his hold of the condemned man and retired outside the door.

"Speak," said Arthur Everton. "Is Carmen dead or alive?"

"She lives!" answered Izard.

"As we thought. Where is she?"

"At present she is an inmate of the house of Mr. Anglesey, the rich merchant of Bristol, and engaged to be married in a week to his adopted son, Ralph."

"How can that be when we have ascertained that Mr. Ralph Anglesey is to be married to Miss Mercedes Marshall Chabot? Beware how you trifle with me," said Quirino, sternly.

"Carmen and Mercedes are one and the same. Mercedes perished at sea and Carmen took her place," answered Izard.

"Admirable stratagem, worthy of such an intriguer," exclaimed Arthur. "You have given me valuable information, and your life is spared."

"May I go ashore now?" asked the gipsy, brightening up again.

"By no means. You will for the present remain a close prisoner on board this vessel. We shall have need of you when Carmen is prosecuted criminally for fraudulently personating another person and imposing upon the credulity of myself and others. You shall be queen's evidence."

"We are lost, both of us," muttered Izard, whose chin fell upon his breast, as he gave himself up to extreme prostration.

He knew that unless he could warn Carmen of her danger Quirino and his determined companion would expose her.

All the gipsy's dream of wealth and grandeur vanished like a house of cards. His evil star was in the ascendant and the situation was critical in the extreme.

Who would have thought that Arthur Everton was alive, and who would have expected Quirino to follow them to England and find out the most intricate details of their new plot?

Quirino summoned the mate and said to him:

"See that this man is closely confined. Bind his hands and place a guard over him."

The mate lost no time in obeying these orders.

He fastened a thin cord round the gipsy's wrists, and tied it in one of those peculiar knots the secret of which is known only to sailors.

At the end of a minute Izard found himself in a small cabin, which was utterly destitute of furniture. Not even a hammock invited repose, and, sinking on the floor, he gave himself up to reflection.

More than once in his adventurous life he had found himself in more desperate situations, and he had discovered the means of getting out of them.

He would have given the world to escape, for it was absolutely necessary that Carmen should be put on her guard or she would be lost.

Whether his fertile mind could hit upon a means of getting out of the difficulties with which he was surrounded was a question which time alone could solve.

Izard had escaped from more than one prison and he hoped that his guiding star had not ceased to burn as brilliantly as heretofore.

His eyes were accustomed to darkness, and looking around him he saw, as it were, instinctively, just in front of him a narrow port-hole.

The hole opened upon the sea, or rather the river Severn, and was protected by a thin pane of glass. Whether it opened or not he could not tell, for, bound as he was, he was unable to make an inspection.

Izard was as thin as a lath, and could almost

squeeze himself through a rat hole. He had the knack of which some convicts can boast, of getting their hands out of hand-cuffs, and he resolved to try if he could not undo the cords which bound him, or at least slip out of them.

A few minutes sufficed to enable him to do this and the cords fell on the floor at his feet.

"That's a good beginning," he muttered. "If the night was not so dark I fancy I should see my star shining brightly somewhere."

He approached the port hole after uttering the encouraging reflection, and with trembling hands essayed to open it, and without difficulty he pushed it outwards.

"I am saved," he cried, with a delicious joy, but his delight was almost immediately checked as he thought of the obstacles he would have to surmount ere he could call himself free.

In fact, supposing the opening to be large enough to permit his body to pass through it, he was not out of danger.

He did not know how far the ship was from the shore. Being able to swim, this made little difference, but he feared the watch might hear him plunge into the water and he would probably be captured a second time.

Without hesitating he introduced his head and shoulders into the hole and, drawing himself along, in a short time half his body was hanging over the calm stream.

About a foot below him was an iron ring to which was attached a rope. Seizing the ring, he lowered himself down and grasped the rope, intending to slide down it to the water.

Casting his eyes upwards, he saw a sailor placidly smoking his pipe and sitting on the side of the ship. The least splash would arouse his attention, and with fingers already beginning to cramp, Izard hung on like grim death to the rope, afraid to move one way or the other.

This lasted several minutes, until his limbs occasioned such torture that he was more than once inclined to cry for help, but the imminence of his danger and the great interest he had at stake checked him.

Just when he found that he could bear the strain no longer the sailor carelessly knocked the ashes out of his pipe, which fell hissing into the water, and the man went below.

Izard summoned all his resolution to his aid, and descended the rope, hand under hand, until he reached the surface of the river, when he slipped in with as much caution as that exercised by a water rat.

He swam quickly to the shore, and, having reached it, shook himself like a Newfoundland dog, uttered a cry of joy, and ran rapidly along the bank to Bristol. Although he had escaped he did not underestimate the danger which threatened him, for he knew that neither Quirino nor Arthur Everton would be slow to renounce the vengeance which they had promised themselves.

It seemed that Quirino had renounced all hope of making Carmen his own, but the love of her had envenomed his soul, he hated her as much now as he had formerly loved her.

As for Arthur Everton, now Lord Kimbolton, he could not be supposed to have much affection for a woman who had deceived him as grossly as Carmen had.

He fancied that he was marrying a lady, whereas he really espoused a needy adventuress, who had no family to boast of, who was of the lowest extraction—a street singer, a dancer, dependent upon the alms of the public for her daily bread, and an impudent impostor who hoped to rise to a position through an alliance with him.

How could he acknowledge such a woman his wife? How could he continue to love her? Was it possible that he could introduce her to society?

Izard thought of all these things, and he trembled more than ever. When he reached his lodging he took off his wet clothes and put on others.

It was about four o'clock in the morning, and he knew that it was useless to try to see Carmen before the servants were up.

At seven o'clock he might have a chance of obtaining an interview, but not before, therefore he had three hours to spare.

He was too much excited to sleep, so he spent the time in reflection.

"I must see Carmen and warn her at once," he said to himself. "She is more threatened than I am. She has more to lose. Yet our interests are identical. We sink or swim together. I betrayed her. I did it to save my life, it is true, still I have betrayed her. What will she say to me? Oh, if Quirino had only waited another week we should have been safe. Carmen's genius is unconquerable. She alone can get us out of this scrape. She alone can save me and herself."

At six o'clock he left his lodgings in Bristol and walked to Mr. Anglesy's house at Clifton.

Like all clever schemers, Carmen was an early riser and seldom remained in bed after seven o'clock.

When he reached the house, and inquired for Miss Mercedes, he was told she was in the garden, and he found her plucking some dahlias.

"You, Izard," she exclaimed, "at this hour of the morning. You frighten me. Has anything happened? You are the bearer of ill tidings, I feel—I know it. Speak quickly. What is wrong?"

"We are lost. That is all," replied Izard.

"Lost?" repeated Carmen, in a stupefied voice.

"Yes, unless a miracle steps in to save us."

"What is it? Good Heaven, cannot you speak out, instead of keeping me in this suspense? Speak, man, speak!" answered Carmen, clutching his arm.

Izard replied:

"Your husband, Arthur Everton, now Lord Kimbolton, is alive."

Carmen sank into a rustic seat and gasped for breath.

(To be continued.)

## LORD DANE'S ERROR.

### CHAPTER XLI.

In his handsome morning-room at Dane House sat Lord Dane, the costly breakfast service still before him, the meal almost untasted; Cheeny, his confidential man, had just left him, and the earl looked as though the conference had not been a pleasant one.

His fine brow was clouded, his eyes gloomy, his firm, white teeth kept biting his lip in a manner uncomfortable to see.

The consent he had given, however reluctantly, to the detention of Perdita Lorne at Rylands had lain heavily on him from the moment it was granted.

Cheeny, with plausible argument and artful suggestions, had managed to keep him from absolutely going and setting her at liberty. Cheeny had gained an extraordinary influence over his master.

It was done by working upon his weaknesses in a clever manner, by reminding him how mighty and powerful the Earl of Dane was now, what a fall this would be, what complete baggery would be his if he lost his position, as he must if the true heiress of all were suffered a chance to establish her rights.

It is true that Lord Dane, having never yet seen Sybil since her marriage to his unhappy friend, still supposed her to be the girl he had so long, so passionately and romantically loved.

It was almost six weeks since Perdita had been inveigled away to Rylands, and he had still no suspicion that she was other than the pretty, awkward rustic Cheeny had described to him, a complete stranger to him, and one to be regarded as an enemy in one sense, because to her of right, as Cheeny carefully and constantly impressed upon him, belonged that lofty position and those immense revenues which were so dear to the grandeur-loving earl.

He was not yet prepared to surrender them, and he dared not set the true heiress free, for fear she would claim them from him. Cheeny still assured him she did not know who she was, though she had a clue to the secret of her birth.

Cheeny had been on this morning closeted with his master a long time.

Perdita he told him had managed to escape from Rylands, but was safe back again, and quite contented now. He wanted another supply of money to keep her so. He named a sum so large that the earl, lavish as he was, looked surprised, but he gave him a cheque for the amount, and Cheeny departed with it.

The truth was that Cheeny's assistants in the business—Mrs. Griff and Clever Dick—refused to go a step farther without being first liberally paid a sum that would secure them handsomely in case anything happened to materially interrupt the success of their wicked plans. Moreover, Cheeny felt that it was necessary to hasten the accomplishment of his treacherous schemes or they would fail utterly.

The accounts of his spirited captive he had received were not encouraging in his sense of the word. Perdita remained defiant and unyielding, as unbroken and tameless as a young leopardess.

The Earl of Dane on the morning referred to sat in his elegant room, with all the rich paraphernalia of his grandeur about him, a most miserable man.

It was impossible but that he should be so. Possessed of a naturally generous and chivalrous disposition, all the life of luxurious indulgence he had lived had not been able entirely to warp that nature from its true course.

Every warm and kindly instinct within him revolted from the unmanly situation he found himself in.

Without suspecting what a terrible interest he had in the fate of Perdita Lorne, he yet could not think of the shameful persecution of her, which he was countenancing, without feeling himself degraded from his manhood to the position of a despicable coward and villain.

Could he have risen above that miserable subjec-

tion to his rank and wealth, which made him regard their loss as an insupportable misfortune, all his misery and shame would have been ended.

But he could not do that.

During all his pampered life that belief had been fostered, till now it seemed that it could not be rooted out.

He could be generous and self-sacrificing, for he had promised Baron Chandos never to speak one word of love to the woman he believed Sybil to be till the innocence of her lost husband was proved to her beyond a doubt.

He was moving every power and influence at his command now to establish that innocence. Could he have the choice offered him between the girl he had loved at Falkner and his earldom, he would have chosen the girl he loved without an instant's hesitation, and yet, for the sake of keeping that earldom, he was permitting his wicked man Cheeny to perpetrate a wrong that ought to shroud all the rest of his life in remorse and ignominy.

What would his emotions be when he discovered that this object of his cruel persecution was the woman of his wild and passionate worship?

It is true that he did not know how bad matters really were at Rylands, that he had not the most remote conception of the infamous doings there.

With him the understanding had been that she was to be supplied with every comfort, luxury, and pleasure that money could buy, that she was to be served respectfully, attended on humbly, as befitting a lady of his own proud family.

He had ordered that she should be deprived of nothing but liberty, and of that only till she should sign a legal document in which she renounced all claim to the rank and possessions Lord Dane now held.

Cheeny had from the first held out the prospect to his master that she could easily be brought to do this, but the earl had not consented to the preparation of such a document until now, partly because he did not like to commit himself to so much of an acknowledgment of her identity as he feared that might be, partly because he felt an insurmountable shame in owing his position to such a concession wrung from a woman.

But he had consented now and Cheeny had gone away with the document in charge and a week's leave of absence, during which time he fully calculated on being able to bring to terms even so obdurate a subject as Perdita.

Cheeny reached Rylands at nine o'clock in the evening. The household there were considerably taken by surprise. They had been looking for the money they had demanded, not himself in person—that is, Mrs. Griff and Clever Dick had.

Both these personages experienced some consternation at the unexpected sight of the master they were serving. Cheeny, who had a quick eye, saw that something was wrong, and his false heart misgave him; but he kept a calm outside, paid them both a heavy instalment of money, and promised them more when the job was finished which he had come there to complete.

Neither Mrs. Griff nor Clever Dick had much to say at first, but when Cheeny rose and declared his intention of having a conference with Perdita that night Clever Dick stopped him.

"See here!" said he, "there's something we ain't told you."

Cheeny compressed his lips.

"I thought there was," he said, and sat down again.

"We didn't dare write it. It wasn't safe to put on paper, you see."

A steely glitter came into Cheeny's eyes as Clever Dick said this. He made a motion for him to go on.

"You ain't asked anything about the particulars of the girl's getting away."

"Because I did not imagine there was anything peculiar about them. I suppose Mrs. Griff here was careless and let old Grizzle get something to drink."

Clever Dick shook his head.

"Nothing of the kind."

Then followed a pretty circumstantial but rather overdrawn account of the manner of Perdita's escape from Rylands, and how she had afterwards tricked Clever Dick.

Cheeny listened, waiting rather impatiently for the real point, the "something not safe to put on paper," which had not yet come.

Clever Dick paused when he got to where Perdita started in the cart down the mountain. He paused with the question, uttered in a most peculiar tone:

"Where do you imagine the young lady stopped at last?"

"I should have expected her to stop with a broken head," said Cheeny, irritably.

"She didn't."

"Then she drove to the station of course."

"No."

"Where then? What do you keep me guessing for?"



Clever Dick's face turned a degree whiter as he crossed his dirty arms over his dirty coat and dropped his chin on his dirty waistcoat. He looked at Cheeny from under his frowzy eyebrows, a half-furtive, half-cunning, fearful glance.

"Mr. Cheeny," he said, slowly, "do you remember letting me have a horse that morning—a Scotch pony? The cart I had, but no horse, and you gave me a line to get one you had stabled in the town."

"Yes, I remember. How could I forget it?" "I didn't suppose you could. Will you tell me now where you think that horse would have gone if he'd been turned loose, left to go where he liked?"

Cheeny did not start, he never moved, but he seemed all at once to collapse as it were, to shrink within himself, and a strange leaden change passed over his face.

"He wouldn't go back to the stable I took him from. Anyhow he didn't. He went about thirty miles from here, to the north, and he took the cart and the young lady with him. She just let him go his own way, and he went where he was most used to being, I fancy."

Cheeny looked like a corpse, his lips were bloodless, his eyes wide and staring. He did not utter a sound. It seemed that he could not.

"We tracked her however and the cart to a house out there in the woods. We caught our runaway there."

A sort of spasm convulsed Cheeny. Great drops were breaking out upon his forehead. He put up his hand and brushed them away mechanically.

"We went inside the house—it was all fastened up, gates and doors and shutters—we broke open a window and went through it. We wasn't going to half do what we'd undertook. We'd tracked the girl there, and we went through the house looking for her. I imagine you can guess what we found there. It wasn't her."

Something like a groan came from Cheeny. He was battling with some fearful agitation—struggling to command himself—but he could not. He looked like the scared and anguished ghost of himself.

Mrs. Griff slipped out of her seat and went to a cupboard in the room. She brought a flask of brandy and a glass, and set them down on a table at his elbow.

Cheeny glanced round vacantly. "Then he seized the flask and, lifting it to his lips with a hand that shook in spite of him, he drank deeply."

The blood began to flow again in his half-paralyzed frame. Self-possession slowly returned to him. He faced Clever Dick with an imprecation.

"What are you up to? What do I know about any house like that you describe?"

"What do you know about the dead woman inside it more like?" demanded Clever Dick, in a sudden rage, rising, and thrusting his hands into his pockets fiercely. "Don't you swear at me, Mr. Cheeny—I won't take it. It happens I know about this business; and it's hanging matter, it is. I've wanted to wring your neck ever since I found it out. What did you get me into any such concern as this for? I'm a villain, I am a low, dirty whelp as ever was born, but I wouldn't give my wife sleeping drink and then bleed her to death for all the countesses in England. I'd like to roast you in that fire this minute, I would, you murdering sneak. Don't you swear at me, or I'll swear at you too."

Cheeny was silent. His eyes were dropped. He was collecting his wits. He saw that he had done a very foolish thing in angering Clever Dick, and he was meditating how he should the easiest conciliate him now.

Mrs. Griff had got up again in her stealthy, noiseless way, and gone over to Clever Dick, in whose ear she whispered.

Clever Dick listened to her in a sort of sulky silence. He was already half regretting what he had said.

Horror he no doubt had of the fearful crime which had been done, but he had become in a measure familiarized with the revolting subject in the weeks that had passed since, without bringing the cruel murder to justice. It was only black anger had made him speak as he had to Cheeny.

He was a thoroughly selfish and unprincipled villain, and had come almost to rejoice at the horrible deed that had been done, because of the hold it gave him upon him who had committed it. His low and cowardly soul was altogether puffed up with the dream of sharing equally with Cheeny in the great harvest of gold he was preparing to reap. He pictured himself to his coarse soul leading the life of a gentleman—his conception of that life consisting of fast horses, flashy attire and plenty of drinks.

When therefore Mrs. Griff suggested that Cheeny and he should shake hands on it and be friends, Clever Dick sulkily extended his dirty fingers to meet Cheeny's white and womanish-looking hand.

The valet had rings upon his carefully kept fingers that few lack—in the hand would have disdained to

"There," said Mrs. Griff, complacently, "that's done with; now, Mr. Cheeny, if you want to talk with the young lady before she retires for the night you'd better go up now."

Cheeny hesitated a moment. The scene just passed had shaken him very much at the time, but the brandy had set him up again, and he felt just about malignant enough and brave enough to bully a woman, especially one so completely in his power as he fancied Perdita was.

He rose once more to his feet, an expression of deadly determination in his evil eyes.

"How is she?" he asked; "sulky as ever?"

"More so," cried Clever Dick. "I believe that young woman has got more pluck than ten Kilkenny cats. The more you try to bring her down the sharper her claws get. Don't you go to being too hard on her all at once, captain. She's got eyes like fiery furnaces, and a tongue that's sharper than a double-edged knife."

"Where is she? In the same room?"

"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Griff.

"Where's Grizzle?"

"Chained outside her door. She's so clever that we thought that was the surest way."

"Where's the whip?"

Mrs. Griff had got a new one. She removed it from a nail on the wall, and gave it to him. Cheeny took a lamp and left the room.

In the hall outside he stopped a moment in thought, muttering to himself. Then he went on.

"She shall marry me if I have to force the wedding-ring upon her finger," he repeated to himself, with dark malignity. "After what I have done I'll not be balked by a dwarfing like her."

As he left the room where Clever Dick and Mrs. Griff were the former caught at the grim house-keeper's arm.

"You never told him about the boy?" he said.

"That I didn't," muttered Mrs. Griff; "let him find out for himself."

(To be continued.)

## FIGHTING WITH FATE.

### CHAPTER XXXI.

UPON the day following the departure of Bing for Lancashire, intent upon his nefarious plot to withdraw Honor Glint from the protection of her friends, Lady Thaxter and her guests were gathered in her ladyship's boudoir. The hour was soon after breakfast.

It had been a fancy of Lady Thaxter to make a collection of albums, each devoted to the representation of some particular country, and filled with photographs of scenery, dwellings, people and costumes, thus constituting a pictorial and veritable history of the country represented.

The Hungarian countess had the album illustrative of Italy open upon her knees, and she was looking through a magnifying glass at a fine photograph of Naya's of the Piazzetta of Venice, with the Palace of the Doges, the church of San Marco, and the famous winged lion upon the lofty column which it surmounts. She was silent and very thoughtful, but her thoughts scarcely seemed to be upon the picture.

It was as if she had been brought face to face with the ghosts of a dead and buried past.

Lady Thaxter was busy with some woollen embroidery, and her needle flew in and out of the meshes of canvas, flashing in the firelight.

Honor Glint had produced a tatting-shuttle and was weaving a delicate lace; while Mrs. Early, Lady Thaxter's companion, who had just returned from her visit to Tooting, was narrating some incident of her brief journey homeward. Sir Hugh Tregaron stood in the open doorway of the conservatory, listening with the others.

It was a pleasant home scene, and its charm was deepened by the pretty industries of Lady Thaxter and Honor. The bright wool and the little pearl shuttle with its load of thread gave an effect of coziness and homeliness to the room and the group which could have been obtained in no other way.

In the midst of Mrs. Early's graphic narration of some amusing incident of travel a servant appeared with a familiar-looking envelope upon a salver.

"A telegram for Miss Glint," he said, presenting the salver to Honor.

The young girl took up the envelope with a trembling hand, and the servant withdrew. Lady Thaxter dropped her embroidery in surprise, Lady Rothsmerer aroused herself from her contemplation of her album, and Sir Hugh Tregaron approached Honor with an anxious look.

"I hope it's not from papa," murmured the girl, her white fingers fluttering at the seal of the envelope. "I fear something has happened to him. He can't have received my letter, I think."

She drew out the slip of paper, and read its contents.

They comprised these words, dated at Bolton:

"Mrs. Glint is dying—attacked with paralysis yesterday. Can live but a few hours. Must see you before she dies. In the name of Heaven forgive and forget the wrongs you have suffered at her hands, and let your presence soothe her remorseful last hours. She calls for you continually. She cannot die in peace without seeing you. Come by the first train."

"CLARETTE MILNER."

The paper dropped from Honor's hands. Sir Hugh without ceremony picked up the message and read it first to himself, then aloud.

The sensation the communication produced can be imagined.

Honor was shocked beyond the power of words to express. She had not loved Mrs. Glint, and she had suffered deeply at her hands—so deeply that time could never efface all the scars of her wounds. But for Mrs. Glint she would never have known the pangs of homelessness and friendlessness; but for her she would never have married Darrel Moer, and so fettered and chained herself to a villain and changed the entire current of her life. But for her Sir Hugh Tregaron might have been spared the bitterness and anguish of her great sorrow. Yet, with all these wrongs crowding swiftly into her mind, Honor's soul throbbed with a generous pity for her enemy, and her heart yearned to soothe the supposed remorse of Mrs. Glint's last hours by her noble forgiveness.

"It really seems as if Heaven's judgment had overtaken the woman," observed Lady Thaxter, breaking the silence. "Dying of paralysis! What shall you do, dear? Shall you write to Miss Milner?"

The girl's lovely face paled, and her vivid eyes of dusk were full of sudden pleading.

"Oh, Lady Thaxter," she exclaimed, "I must go to her! How can I ask forgiveness of my Creator if I refuse to forgive my fellow-creature? She is papa's wife, and he loves her. How could I meet him on his return, and tell him that I had scorned his wife's last prayer to me for forgiveness, and that, although I was but a few hours' distance from her, I yet refused to go to her?"

"You are right," said Lady Thaxter, with decision. "One cannot be governed, in a case like this, by a merely human sense of justice. At first thought I desired you to write to her and to remain here, but her remorse for her treatment of you must be terrible. No doubt your presence by her bedside, and the assurance of your forgiveness from your own lips, will soothe her as nothing else will do. Still I will not give a governing opinion. Hugh, you have known Mrs. Glint. What should Honor do?"

"She had best follow the dictates of her own generous heart," said Sir Hugh, with a look of tender reverence in his grave gray eyes, as he looked upon the girl's agitated face. "Honor is actuated by the noblest principles of our holy Christian religion. If she chooses to 'do good to them that despitefully use' her she is only obeying the precepts of One who was all forgiving, and I would not hold her back from what she deems her duty."

Honor flashed upon the young baronet a grateful look, and she said:

"I must go by the first train, and I pray Heaven that I may arrive in time."

Not a doubt obtruded itself upon any of them—not even upon Sir Hugh, who was so watchful over Honor—of the genuineness of the telegram. Why should they doubt it? They could not see that Darrel Moer could in any way be benefited by the appearance of Honor Glint at Bolton. The very simplicity of Bing's ruse gave it the greater semblance of truth.

"I will consult a Bradshaw," said Sir Hugh. "I am confident that there is an express which leaves Euston Square at noon. I will order the carriage in time. But who are to compose the party? You will have your maid, Honor. I shall go of course—"

"Not of course, Hugh," said Lady Thaxter as her nephew paused. "My dear boy, you must not travel to Lancashire as Honor's escort. Remember that she is bound to another man, that she is not even your promised wife. Forgive me if I wound you, Hugh, but I love you both, and I fear that your attentions will compromise Honor. You are not her brother or relative, nor even her betrothed husband. You must consider her fair name above everything else in the world, and I assure you, dear Hugh, that I cannot approve of your project of accompanying the dear girl to Lancashire."

Sir Hugh's countenance showed that he was enduring an inward conflict. He said, gravely:

"I see the propriety of your suggestions, Aunt Julia. I must relinquish the pleasure of escorting Honor upon her journey, but who is to go in my place? You cannot go, Aunt Julia?"

"No," replied Lady Thaxter, half regretfully, for she had grown to love Honor very tenderly, "my engagements detain me here. There is the flower-

show to-day, in addition to engagements to dine to-day and to-morrow, and there is also the Clamorris ball this evening, with a host of other engagements which I particularly wish Lady Rothmere to accept." "I shall be glad to go," said Mrs. Early. "I think with Lady Thaxter that it would be better for you, Sir Hugh, to remain in London. We shall not need your escort. I am an experienced traveller, and can take good care of Miss Gint. I defy any harm to come to her while in my charge."

Mrs. Early was a shrewd and sensible woman, and Sir Hugh felt that he could not do better than to trust Honor to her care. He acquiesced in the arrangement without demur.

"You will arrive at Bolton about five o'clock, if the train leaves Euston Square at twelve," observed the young Cornish baronet, thoughtfully. "You will thus arrive before dark, and will not suffer greatly from fatigue."

"I advise you to proceed directly to an hotel upon your arrival," said Lady Thaxter, who was noted for her attention to minor points, such as this. "The Red House—as I think your papa's place is called, Honor—must necessarily be in a state of confusion, and you will promote your comfort by securing a good lodging at an hotel beforehand. Be sure and get your dinner before going to see Mrs. Gint. There is nothing like foriffing one's self against depressing influences. I shall expect a telegram from you to inform me of Mrs. Gint's state to-morrow, and every day until her illness terminates. My dear Honor, we shall look for you and long for you each day until your return, which I pray may be as soon as possible."

Honor made a suitable reply, and withdrew with Mrs. Early to prepare for her journey.

Sir Hugh found and studied a Bradshaw.

Honor went to her own room, finding her maid engaged in trimming a dinner dress for expected use.

"I shan't need that, Lucky," she said, sighing. "Hang it up in the wardrobe, and pack my valise for a journey. Mrs. Gint is dying, and I am going to Bolton by the first train. You are to accompany me."

Lucky obeyed her young mistress, and deftly packed the valise while Honor proceeded to exchange the cashmere morning robe for her gray travelling dress.

She was partially disrobed when a low knock was heard upon her door, and the beautiful Hungarian countess entered her room.

"Can I be of any assistance to you, Miss Gint?" she inquired.

Honor thanked her, but replied in the negative.

"I want to say," continued the countess, her lovely face flushed with feeling, her radiant eyes full of tenderness, "how I admire your brave, resolute, tender nature; how I am pleased at your prompt and pitying response to the appeal of this person who seems to have wronged you. I do not know why it is, Miss Gint, but I have loved you from the moment I first saw you. I have felt as if our lives were strangely entwined. It may be that I can be of help to you in the great trouble shadowing your life. If I can help you I will."

She came nearer to Honor and kissed the girl's cheek softly.

A tress of hair had escaped from its bounds, and was straying over Honor's white shoulders. The countess pressed the golden lock to her lips, and restored it to its confinement.

As she was about to retreat, and Honor took up her dress to put it on, the Hungarian countess caught sight of a vivid, irregular scar upon the girl's left wrist.

It was nearly the counterpart of that scar upon Hilda Floyd's arm, which had so materially assisted in the identification of Lord Walden's heiress.

Every trace of colour fled from Lady Rothmere's cheeks and lips as she beheld this scar, so like to that she had seen upon the arm of Hilda Floyd.

"That mark—what is it?" she asked, in a quivering whisper.

Honor, full of surprise, replied, courteously:

"I don't know, madam. I fancy it must have been inflicted with a knife in my early childhood, but I do not remember."

The Hungarian countess made a little swoop forward and caught the girl's arm, and scanned its white and rounded surface with eager, dilating eyes.

There, above the elbow, imprinted in the tender flesh as if by a hot iron, was a slender, irregular dagger-shaped mark of the most vivid scarlet. It was evidently a birth mark.

A strange, low cry broke from the lips of the foreign countess.

She tried to speak, but fell forward—as she had done once before in the same house—in a death-like state of unconsciousness.

Honor flew to the bell, pealing an alarm through the house. Then, with the aid of Lucky, she bore the form of her visitor to a couch.

Leaving her frightened maid to minister to the countess, Honor hurried on her dress and made herself presentable.

A servant appeared, and Honor despatched her in quest of Lady Thaxter, who came without an instant's delay.

By this time Honor was chafing the limp hands of the countess, and had loosened her ladyship's corset.

"What has happened, my dear?" asked the hostess, in astonishment. "Is Lady Rothmere ill?"

"She has only fainted," answered Honor. "Her heart beats, although but faintly. She seems to be subject to these attacks. Ought not a physician to be sent for?"

Lady Thaxter bent over her guest with anxious interest.

"She must be removed to her room immediately," said her ladyship. "Lady Rothmere is not one to faint at a mere trifle. I could almost think she had been subjected to some overpowering excitement. Her maid may know what to do for her."

The countess was transported to her own rooms with the greatest care, and her maid, an elderly Hungarian woman, who was devoted to her beautiful mistress, declining the attendance of a physician, engaged in promoting Lady Rothmere's recovery.

Lady Thaxter did not quit the side of her guest until the countess opened her eyes, looking about her with a wild and startled gaze. A strengthening draught had been prepared for her ladyship by the orders of Lady Thaxter, and this was administered. White as death, and with a strange weariness, the countess sank back upon her pillow and seemed to fall asleep.

It was then that Lady Thaxter stole out of the room and rejoined Honor.

The young girl had finished her toilet, and was fully attired for her journey, even to her little hat and short, coquettish gray veil, which terminated at her little spirited chin. Lucky was also ready with her young lady's valise in her hand.

"Is the countess better, dear Lady Thaxter?" asked Honor, anxiously. "Do you think she will be ill?"

"No, my dear. She has fallen asleep through sheer exhaustion of the vital forces, but will awake herself again. It was a very odd attack. She must be much more delicate than I thought, and yet she told me only yesterday that her constitution was like 'tempest steel.' You must not carry an anxious heart away with you, dear, upon Lady Rothmere's account."

"I shall not see her again before I go," said Honor.

"Please, give her my best love, dear Lady Thaxter, and tell her I was sorry to go without seeing her."

They descended to the boudoir, where Sir Hugh awaited them. Here Mrs. Early joined them.

A little later the carriage arrived, and Honor, with her maid and Mrs. Early, took their departure. Sir Hugh Tregaron accompanied them to the station, and obtained a first-class compartment for their exclusive use. He waited until they had steamed out of the station in the swift northward-bound train, and then returned to Park Lane.

Lady Thaxter met him at the drawing-room door.

"How is the countess, Aunt Julia?" he asked.

"Much better, Hugh. She is up again and fully dressed. She is in the boudoir now, and has asked to see Honor. Finding that Honor had gone, she asked for you. Go to her, my dear boy, and amuse her. I will come to you in an hour or two, so soon as my dressmaker, who is awaiting me upstairs, shall have gone."

Sir Hugh proceeded to the boudoir, and Lady Thaxter hastened to keep her appointment with her dressmaker.

The young baronet found the countess reclining amid silken cushions upon a broad low couch near the fire in the boudoir, and in a position to command a view of all the vivid brightness within the conservatory.

She was still very pale, but her blue eyes burned with a feverish glitter.

She half arose at Sir Hugh's entrance, and said, in a quick, eager voice:

"Sir Hugh, be seated, please. I have asked you to come to me that I may put to you a few questions. I desire our interview to be strictly confidential. You may think me intrusive and I beg you to gratify my—my anxiety. Nay, it is not curiosity. I have a motive, even though I cannot tell it to you."

"Any information which I can impart to you, Lady Rothmere, I will gladly hasten to give," replied Sir Hugh, taking a seat near her.

"Who, then, is this young girl—the young Honor Gint?"

The countess waited for the young baronet's answer in a breathless suspense.

He noticed that she quivered with agitation.

"She is, unhappily, the wife of Darrel Moor," an-

swered Sir Hugh, "although she left him at the altar. She is bound by ties she cannot break to one of the greatest scoundrels in the universe."

"Yes, yes, I know," breathed the countess. "I know all this, Sir Hugh; but who is she?"

"She is the daughter of Captain Gint, of the merchant-marine, commander of the steamship 'Argos,' plying between Liverpool and Alexandria," replied Sir Hugh Tregaron, gravely.

The Hungarian countess uttered a quick ejaculation, that seemed laden with a keen disappointment.

"Sir Hugh," she exclaimed, "I am nearly a stranger to you, but you know me well by reputation. You must know that I am incapable of inquiring into Miss Gint's history with any unworthy motive. Some years ago chance threw in my way—that is, I learned some singular facts which may bear upon Miss Gint's history," said the countess, disjoinedly. "I believe that there has been a foul wrong done to one of the proudest families in England, and I believe that some young girl has been equally wronged. I seem to speak mysteriously. My thoughts are in a chaos. The facts that came to my knowledge years ago may assist in unravelling a terrible mystery. I may have been sent to England as the instrument of an avenging Providence. But I must know more about Miss Gint. I cannot resist the conviction that she is connected with the story I have heard. Oh, Sir Hugh, is there not some hope, however faint—is there not the glimmer of a hope, that Miss Gint is not the own daughter of Captain Gint?"

The countess bent forward, her hands clasped in piteous entreaty.

The young Cornish baronet began to shudder with excitement and agitation. He drew his chair nearer to her unconsciously. His grandly noble face had grown pale, and his voice was uneven as he responded:

"Lady Rothmere, your singular questioning of your frank appeal to me shall be met with complete reserve. I cannot understand your allusions, but it is possible that you may hold in your hands a clue to a mystery which I would give much to solve. Honor is not the own daughter of Captain Gint."

"Not his daughter! Not! Oh, Heaven!"

The countess started up wild and frantic, beating back upon the couch, one jewelled hand clatching convulsively at her bosom.

"She is not his daughter, madam," said Sir Hugh, striving to speak calmly, yet with an anxious look in his gray eyes. "Captain Gint was never married until two years since, when he married a widow lady—the same whose illness and approaching death were telegraphed to Honor this morning. Her husband is not even his relative. He found her when a little child, years ago, in a Mediterranean port, in the arms of an Englishwoman who was wandering about the streets, ill, and upon the eve of death, if not at the moment actually delirious."

The countess gave a long, sobbing sigh.

"What port?" she asked, breathlessly.

"Valencia, madam."

"Valencia! Valencia! Captain Gint found the child at Valencia! What name did the nurse give the child?"

"Not any, Lady Rothmere. The woman only said she wished to go to England. At any rate, if she said more, I do not know it. Honor told me the story once when in great agitation, and I may not have the facts correctly. I do not remember the nurse's name, even if I know it. The woman was a nurse, I understand, and not the child's mother. I cannot even remember what became of the woman, although I believe she was put ashore at the first port and sent to an hospital. Ah, yes, I do remember now. She grew delirious, and Captain Gint feared she would die. He obtained admission for her into an hospital at Marselles through the English Consul, when he next stopped at Marselles he discovered that the woman had recovered from her illness and was gone. He never heard of her again."

"And this is all you know, Sir Hugh?"

"All, Lady Rothmere. Honor can tell you more."

"One question," breathed the countess, eagerly—"do you know whether Honor Gint has in her possession a peculiar ornament, a small black oval ball, surrounded by a tiny band of gold set with minute diamonds? The ball looks as if it were real, but is really hollow. Does she possess such an ornament?"

She waited as if her life hung upon his answer. Sir Hugh was surprised at the question, but he hastened to answer it.

"Yes," he said. "Honor has such an ornament, which she has worn at her water chain. But it is not hollow, I think, madam. Honor has mentioned that she has never been able to open it, and she believes it solid."



Lady Rothemere rose up, white and stern, but wondrously lovely, her blue eyes glowing with a radiance that was as far beyond their usual lustre as the sunlight surpasses in brightness the starlight.

"I am convinced!" she said, and her voice rang out clear and sweet like the notes of a flute. "Sir Hugh, I thank you for your confidence. I must see Honor and Captain Glint. I have much to do. But, if Providence do not forestall my efforts, I shall right a wrong which is beyond your conception; I will place young Honor in a position which is far above your own in a social point of view; I will free her from the hated shackles that bind her to Darrel Moor; I will give her to you as one of the noblest, best-born, fairest brides the sun ever shone upon! Only be patient, as I must be. Trust me, I repeat, Sir Hugh. I am your friend and hers. Trust me. This mystery shall be cleared!"

She gave him her hand, and slowly went into the conservatory with a gesture that signified her wish to be alone.

#### CHAPTER XXXII.

It was about five o'clock of the gray March afternoon that Honor Glint, with Mrs. Early and Lucky Banner, arrived at Bolton. In accordance with the advice of Lady Thaxter, they entered a cab and were driven to an hotel.

Bing was lounging about the station, skilfully disguised, and, with a chuckle of satisfaction, followed them to their destination.

"So far good!" he muttered. "They are doing precisely as I expected. I am sure to succeed." Mrs. Early demanded at the hotel a private sitting-room with three bedrooms attached, and was duly gratified.

A cozy little parlour overlooking the street, with a bedroom opening off either side of it, and a third bedroom adjoining one of the others, were placed at the disposal of the party.

Mrs. Early ordered dinner to be served in the little parlour, which order was promptly obeyed. Soon after six o'clock Mrs. Early ordered a cab, and Honor proceeded to attire herself in her outer garments.

"I may be detained late, Lucky," she said to her faithful maid, "and I may even not be back until morning. If I find Mrs. Glint very near death, I may remain until all is over."

"I wish you were not going, miss," said the girl. "I feel somehow as if something were going to happen—something unpleasant, I mean. I wish you would let me go with you."

"It will be better for you to remain here and have some hot tea for us, Lucky," said Mrs. Early. "I shall go with Miss Glint, and we shall probably be tired when we return."

"I beg you will remain here also, Mrs. Early," exclaimed Honor. "I know Bolton thoroughly. I shall go to the Red House in a cab, and return in one. No harm can possibly come to me, and I would not subject you to the inconvenience of spending hours perhaps in a house of sickness among strangers. I beg you to allow me to go alone."

Mrs. Early shook her head smilingly, and buttoned her cloak tightly over her chest.

"My dear," she said, "the last words Sir Hugh Tregan said to me to-day were to the effect that I must not lose sight of you during our absence from home. I intend to obey him almost literally. You are placed in my care as a precious charge by Sir Hugh and by Lady Thaxter, and, although I know we are in your own familiar town, and that no harm is likely to come to you, I shall yet not permit you to go outside these doors without me. Better to be too guarded, my dear, than to be not guarded enough."

Honor made no farther objections, and with a last injunction to Lucky she departed from the safe shelter of her rooms and ascended with Mrs. Early to the street.

The cab was in waiting. They entered it, giving the order, and were driven through the familiar streets toward the pleasant outlook in which Captain Glint's house was situated.

The cab came to a halt at last in the growing dusk before the gate of the Red House, and the ladies alighted.

"You can wait," said Mrs. Early, addressing the cabman. "We may be out again directly, but if we are likely to remain inside for some time we will send you word and dismiss you."

A man who was lurking in the lawn shrubbery, wearing a heavy red beard and wig, and a slouching overcoat that came to his heels, chuckled softly under his breath:

"Better and better. Any one would think that this woman is my fellow conspirator. She makes my work easy."

The man thus lurking in the garden of the Red House was Darrel Moor's valet, Bing.

The cabman assented to the lady's proposition, and Honor opened the gate and led the way up the walk.

Bing retreated still farther into the shadow of the shrubbery and seemed to be at work.

As Honor and Mrs. Early approached nearer to the house they noticed that it was brilliantly lighted in all the lower rooms.

The windows were still uncurtained, and the lights flared broadly out upon the darkening lawn.

"It does not look like a house of death, my dear," said Mrs. Early, slackening her pace.

"Still it's very silent," answered Honor. "Oh, I hope—I hope Mrs. Glint is still alive."

Without another word they pressed on to the pretty stone porch, and Honor's own hands sounded the knocker of the house that had so long been her home.

A boy in livery, plentifully besprinkled with brass buttons, came to the door.

He was a new acquisition at the Red House, and was apparently not yet at home in his position.

Honor advanced into the little hall.

"How is Mrs. Glint now?" she asked, breathlessly.

The boy looked perplexed and wondering.

"She's about the same, miss," he said, in a puzzled tone. "I don't know no difference in her."

"Will you tell Miss Milner that Miss Glint has come?" said Honor, trying to speak calmly.

She moved past the bewildered boy in buttons, and advanced into the drawing-room, Mrs. Early following.

The boy closed the door and hurried upstairs. This was the moment Bing had awaited.

He hurried down to the gate and accosted the driver.

"Here, you cabby," he exclaimed, assuming a strong Irish accent as a greater disguise. "The lady will stay. Be off with you. Here's your money."

He handed the cabman a half-sovereign. That worthy examined the piece by his lamp, bit it, rang it, and then, satisfied of its genuineness, thrust it into his pocket, gathered up his reins and drove away in haste, returning whence he had come. Evidently, as no change had been demanded, the cabman believed that the lady had overpaid him through mistake, and he would not give her an opportunity to repair her supposed error.

Bing watched the cab until it had disappeared from sight, and then he hurried swiftly down the road in an opposite direction.

Not many rods distant, beyond a curve in the road, and in a blind alley-way bordered on each side by high stone walls, was a second cab without a driver, the horse tied to a projecting stone in one of the walls.

Bing untied the horse, mounted the box and drove to the gate of the Red House, where he halted.

The horse and cab belonged to a man whom Bing knew well, and the valet had borrowed the equipage for an hour, promising to leave it at a certain spot a few miles distant, where its owner was awaiting its arrival.

With the expenditure of five pounds Bing had secured this man's co-operation in his plans, so far as he chose to reveal them, and his silence in regard to the matter also. He had told him nothing beyond what was absolutely necessary, betraying none of his ulterior schemes, even though he knew he could thoroughly depend upon the fellow, who was a man after his own heart.

And now, with a fiendish gleam in his soul, Bing awaited the appearance of Honor and her friend.

They, meanwhile, were seated in the parlour of the Red House, awaiting in anxious expectancy the appearance of Miss Milner.

"Mrs. Glint must be dead, I think," said Mrs. Early, in a suppressed voice.

The clicking of metallic boot heels upon the creaked stairs was heard, the rustle of silk, and the door opened and Miss Milner swept into the room.

Honor sprang up, pale with excitement.

"How is she?" she asked, in a fluttering voice.

"She is not dead? Tell me that I am in time!"

Miss Milner indulged in a supercilious stare at Honor and at her companion.

"In time for what, if I may ask?" she demanded.

"To see Mrs. Glint before she dies," said Honor, choking.

"Oh, an 'Tis time, Clarette!"

Before Miss Milner could reply there was a second clicking of boot heels, heavier this time, upon the creaked stairs, another rustling of silk, and again the door opened, giving admission upon this occasion to Mrs. Glint herself.

Honor retreated a step in amazement, scarcely believing the evidence of her senses.

But Mrs. Glint was the impersonation of health, looking robust and red. She had attired herself

hastily in a tight-fitting gown of black silk sprinkled over with gold-coloured spots, and wore an amplitude of gold chains and rings. She looked supercilious, like her daughter, and was withal apparently troubled and anxious as to the errand of Honor. She glanced at Mrs. Early with marked disfavour.

"So you have come back to this house after I expelled you from it, miss?" she exclaimed, testily. "Certainly you are the last person I ever expected to see here, but you have impudence enough, it seems, for anything. What do you want here?"

Honor sank back in the chair from which she had risen, completely nerveless.

"I—I received a telegram this morning, in London, she faltered, "stating that you were dying, Mrs. Glint, and that you desired my forgiveness and my presence at your death-bed. I came on by the first train."

"You were very accommodating, I must say," sneered Mrs. Glint. "But I didn't telegraph to you, and I don't believe you received any telegram. I've no intention of dying at present, and if I had I shouldn't send for you, you may rest assured, miss. As for your forgiveness, pray keep it until it's called for."

Honor turned to Miss Milner, beginning to grow calm.

"The telegram was signed with your name, Clarette," she said, "Did you not send it to me?"

"No, I did not," answered Miss Milner, disdainfully. "I don't believe you received any telegram. Where is it? Show it."

"I did not bring it with me."

"Oh, no!" sneered Mrs. Glint. "Of course not. I can't understand why you are back here, miss. A young woman so much run after as you are had best hide herself, I think. I cannot permit my innocent Clarette to be contaminated with your presence. If you've come here for money you won't get it. Mr. Darrel Moor and Sir Hugh Tregan have been here inquiring after you with a persistence that should be a shame to any modest girl. I had a letter from a lodging-house keeper at Southport informing me of your grand escapades and drawing-rooms at her house, and saying that she had been obliged to turn you out of her house. She said you had gone to London. I suppose you have spent your money and have come back with this—this person to black-mail me? You may even hope to recover your old place in this house. You may as well relinquish the idea, miss."

Mrs. Early rose up with quiet dignity.

"Miss Glint received this morning a telegram from Bolton signed with the name of Clarette Milner, begging her in the name of Heaven to come to your death-bed without delay," said Mrs. Early. "Full of pitying forgiveness she came at once, and I accompanied her to protect her. Evidently the telegram was sent for some base purpose. I am not sure, madam, that you did not send it in anticipation of the vulgar triumph of a reception like this."

"You are not sure," cried Mrs. Glint. "And who are you, pray? Who cares for your opinion? You're a creature—a person I would not deign to look at outside my own house. You and Honor are well matched. Leave my house," and her infuriated voice rose to a scream. "Go this minute, or I'll call the police. My servants shall put you out."

Honor's proud face flushed. A haughty look shone in her vivid eyes. Without a word, but with a haughty silence, she passed from the room and from the house. Mrs. Early, with unflinching dignity, followed her slowly.

Mrs. Glint and her daughter pursued the visitors to the door, which they slammed and double-locked after them.

Half-way down the walk Honor stole her hand into that of Mrs. Early, and said:

"I would have spared you this, dear friend, if I could only have suspected the truth. I know Clarette is malicious. Do you think she could have sent that telegram? She must have discovered my whereabouts from Miss Brown, who listened at my door more than once, and who must have been aware that I was in London under the protection of Lady Thaxter."

"That is the right explanation, dear. It is a cowardly, dastardly insult! It's a pity that woman might not really be ill and send for you in vain. We will take the first train back to town in the morning. My poor child, how you must have suffered since your papa's marriage to that odious woman!"

They passed out at the gate, and made their way to the cab. It was now dusk, and they did not see that the driver and the cab were not the same they had employed. They entered the vehicle and closed the door. The blinds were already up.

"To the hotel," said Mrs. Early.

Bing cracked his whip, the horse bounded forward, and the cab rolled swiftly away into the darkness.

(To be continued.)



[ON DECK.]

## A WICKED CONSPIRACY.

It was at once a fortunate and unfortunate day that pretty Miss Agnes came into possession of a yacht.

Her papa gave it to her in place of a husband. He had resolutely frowned upon as handsome a fellow as there ever was in the world, and had put an emphatic foot down upon the lovelaking.

It is easy to understand that Miss Agnes pined. The colour quitted her cheeks, she lost her taste for dinner, and one day her doting and anxious yet immovable father caught her reading "Dr. Doremus on the Action of Deadly Poisons."

This frightened him, and he went out directly and purchased the best yacht he could find along the coast. He knew Agnes had a weakness in that direction.

"Look at her, my love," said he, pointing out the craft as she lay under the brow of the cliff. "Look at her spars, her delicate ropes, her polished hull, her hawseers and your uniformed sailors. What do you think? Is not that a joy for a queen?"

She smiled and said nothing, but thought of Will. "Fancy yourself scudding along over the billows," continued the father, with a voice of well-assumed ecstacy, "remember how the foam flies and the waves break and the cordage sings! Think of where you can go. Think how happy you will be, perfectly free of time-tables, of railways, of steamboat landings, and of all trouble and worry about baggage. If you want to have a cruise all you have to do is to lay in provisions and pull up your anchor and be off. Think of it. It's famous!"

Miss Agnes permitted herself to be led down to look at the boat, and she praised it, though it must be said everything looked pretty gloomy on every hand.

Her sun had been extinguished and all was dark. Still she applauded her yacht and pretended to be greatly delighted when the sailors set the sails and

lifted their anchor, and took her out for a few miles just to show her the possibilities of her new possession.

But Will, though rebuffed and furious, was still not hopeless. He beheld the yacht, and he knew what she was meant for.

He struck his hands together energetically and exclaimed:

"By George, they shall not get her away from me! Perhaps I've been a pretty worthless sort of a fellow, but I'm not entirely lost yet. I'll get her, by hook or by crook. I'm not a scoundrel. I'm not a villain. And if there's anything wrong about me I'll set myself right for her as quickly as for anybody. Marry her! I rather think it's worth scheming for."

So he went home and tied a wet towel around his head and sat down to think it out.

Three hours after, when it was quite dark, he sallied out with his vest pocket full of silver. He made his way to Miss Agnes's cottage on the bluff, and, although all the lights were out save the servants' lamp in the kitchen, he was undaunted.

The coachman of the family had once been a servant in his father's house, so he crossed the little toy garden and rapped at the rear door. As luck would have it, the identical Michael came to ask what was wanted, and Will drew him out into the shadow and gave him some money and a note for his mistress.

The man laughed a little. "Hold your tongue, sir," cried Will.

When the man had gone our hero paced up and down an elm-tree walk, feeling that matters were progressing finely.

In three minutes' time an upper window-lash was raised slightly, and a little handkerchief was shaken in the air. Fifteen minutes later a pretty figure stole down the avenue and met with a lover-like reception.

After a few moments Will became dignified and solemn and Agnes grew anxious.

"Oh, why did you come here, Will?" she said. "Why do you run the risk? You know I love you! You know there is no danger that I would not undertake for you! But—but—but my father loves me too!"

"Well, of course he does. He's a sensible man in most things. But in regard to me he's made a blunder. I mean to marry you in spite of all the fathers in Christendom! Now I'm not going to do it out of bravado, I've determined upon it because I'm sure we shall be happy together. I know you were meant for my wife and I am positive that I was intended for your husband. Looking at things from that standpoint, you perceive that all the fathers and relatives in the world do not weigh a feather in the scale. The fathers and relatives must take seats in the rear and preserve that position until the parties most concerned are entirely and completely suited. Now I shan't be suited until you are my wife, and I want to ask if you are entirely satisfied because they have given you a pretty boat as a compensation for me."

She simply gave him an astonished look. He felt it even in the dark, and he felt ashamed for having put the question.

Then they strolled off a little farther, and Will debated with himself how he should put his case to her.

His plan just at that moment looked pretty wild and unfeasible, but he felt that he must put a bold face upon it. He began by taking her hand afresh. She commenced to weep.

This mode of argument was kept up for ten good minutes, and nothing to the point was said. Finally Will came to the surface. He put his lips down to her ear and held her tight until he had finished. Then she burst away from him and ran off a dozen yards. She was overwhelmed with astonishment. He put his hands in his pockets and waited until she came to her senses.

"Oh, what a monster you are!" whispered she. "Well," he replied, "exactly as you like. I shan't dispute your verdict. You are a woman of good judgment."

Sarcasm always withered her. She came back by slow degrees and finally sat down beside him upon a garden bench and began to talk rationally. Still she was pretty well frightened; what Will had said to her had made her tremble like a leaf. But after all he had a smooth tongue and a taking way. He persuaded her.

"It's our only chance, Agnes. Either we must do it or be separated for ever. After a month we shall be parted, and then we shall repent bitterly. It seems like a desperate act. But this crisis is a desperate one. Your father thinks me brainless and selfish. I do not wonder that he does not love me over much, but I do maintain that he should not judge me by the character one is obliged to display in a watering-place. No, I am good for something more. But I have settled you must be my wife, and your father, with all respect to him, must stand aside. Now what I have proposed is a rather adventurous plan. You will require nerve and resolution and so shall I. It is only necessary that your father should look at me in a different light than he does now for us to be completely happy. If you will act your part I will promise that in forty-eight hours from this time I shall be a hero in your father's eyes and a promised husband to yourself. What do you say?"

What could she say? She had to weep a great deal of course, and Will felt it was necessary to support her in his arms. She demurred, and doubted, and objected, and trembled again, but she finally acquiesced and gave Will her hand.

After this the compact was sealed in the usual manner, and in due time the pretty Miss Agnes returned to her home, a conspirator and a schemer, and Will retired across the toy garden an arch villain of the blackest hue.

The next day he found out the value of money, and he was busy dispensing it in various quarters. Miss Agnes also was actively engaged. She seemed to be ill. Her father thought she must be love-sick. Thereupon he proposed that she should take her yacht and go out for a breath of fresh sea air. She demurred. He persisted, as she knew he would, and pretty soon she languidly consented. It fortunately happened for Agnes that her father was compelled to go away on a matter of business quite early in the day, and therefore he recommended her to the care of the sailing-master, a little tow-headed old man.

When this arrangement was completed the sailing-master bent on Miss Agnes a humorous eye and winked. She blushed and fled.

At 12 o'clock Miss Agnes bade an adieu to the best of fathers, and he went away overjoyed to be able to imagine his daughter was in a fair way of recovery from her affection of the heart.

At half-past twelve she was on board her little boat. Everything for her comfort was to be found



there. There were supplies of fruits, preserves, food, novels, awnings and cushions. There were three sailors on board besides the sailing-master and an assistant.

Now for some mysterious reason the assistant went ashore and forgot to come back again. Thus there were left only the tow-headed captain and his small crew, who were all young men, hardly more than boys.

Besides, Miss Agnes had brought her maid for company. All seemed delightful. Miss Agnes had a white parasol lined with red, and she sat where she was positively forbidden to—on the quarter-rail. However, something was due to her agitation.

Everything went well, or seemed to do so. The anchor was raised at one, and they began to move out of the harbour with a strong breeze abaft.

The sailors were merry but silent, and the sailing-master at the tiller kept one hand in his pocket the greater part of the time, and from it there came a significant jingling of silver.

They sailed and sailed. Two o'clock came, then three o'clock, then four o'clock.

Miss Agnes shut up her book and gazed about. She looked at her watch and then at the sea.

About half a mile from her there was another yacht cruising about, and she gazed at it earnestly.

While she was thus engaged a terrible wrangle broke out among the three men forward. They leaped upon each other with every appearance of fury, and began struggling like so many demons.

The captain shouted to them, and vociferated, and stamped, but they seemed to ignore him.

It looked like mutiny. The maid began to scream and to ring her hands.

"We shall all be murdered!" cried Miss Agnes in her ear.

She became frantic. The captain braced the tiller and looked to see if there was a steady breeze, and then leaped forward.

The three set upon him with great violence. He gave a tremendous "Hilloa!" to the other yacht and Miss Agnes sprang to turn her flag bottom up.

She did it in two seconds by catching the under edge of the flag and fastening it over the top with a hair-pin which she twisted through the halliards. Let women alone for expedients.

Thus she had a signal of distress. But there was a glorious fight going on; one man seemed to be prosecuted and the rest were in the full vigour of their contest. It was mutiny clear and simple.

In a moment there was a little noise from the other yacht. She was close under the lee. They pushed off a boat from her deck and four men clambered into it.

Agnes rejoiced to watch her maid tremble with terror.

"What a frightful story she'll tell papa to be sure!" reflected that young lady.

But in two minutes the assistance arrived.

The four men leaped on the deck—three of them deeply in earnest, and the quarrelling sailors were soon separated and the captain of the party ordered them in a ringing voice to be put into irons.

It is needless to mention that this was Will, full of ardor.

He ordered the captain, who seemed exhausted and half dead, to be carried below and he sent thither the maid to nurse him.

He then took command of the yacht and turned about and with his three men forward he ran for the shore again.

"Very well managed," whispered he to Agnes.

"You looked exactly like a hero, Will," said she.

"Did I?" rejoined he, complacently.

But alas they were not quite through yet. Will had just said to himself:

"He can't refuse me now; think of it; daughter at sea; mutiny on board; death lurking everywhere; captain disabled; heart's darling in danger of going to the sharks; fortune throws help in her way; brave rescue; prompt action; turns out that deliverer is old lover; nothing to do but to shake hands and give up the daughter at once."

He had no sooner fancied this line of reasoning than a hissing noise, mingled with a roar, came to his ear.

His sailors shouted. He looked under the main boom and his blood froze with horror, for there close upon him was the butt-end of a white squall. He thrust the helm hard down, hauled in his sheets taut, and shut his eyes for one second. Then he braced himself and held Agnes like grim death.

The tempest seized upon the boat as if it were a straw and it went flying through the mist and foam like a race-horse.

The sailors took in double reefs. The companion way was shut and fastened, Miss Agnes first being sent below.

For half an hour there was considerable danger.

The water burst over the quarters and swept the decks repeatedly.

Will began to think this looked like earning a wife. The cordage seemed fairly alive with fends, and it was even chances if things went by the board or stayed where they belonged.

All at once Will heard something give way and felt a tremendous rush and a savage blow upon the side of his head, then he saw the sailors rush towards him and felt himself slide down.

When he came to again he was in his own room. On either hand was a doctor; before him was the white and terrified Miss Agnes and her grateful-looking father.

"What is the matter?" whispered Will.

"Why, you're half dead, don't you know it?" said one of the doctors.

It seemed that a savage wave had twisted the rail from off the stern of the yacht and had hurled it forward and precipitated it upon Will. The blow had been severe and his right arm was badly fractured.

"The deuce," thought he.

"Pa says I may nurse you, Will," murmured Miss Agnes, coming forward with a frightened expression.

"Of course she can, my poor fellow. Who has a better right than she? No one that I know of. Good gracious, my boy, I didn't know you were such a brave man. Subdue mutiny! Save a yacht! Encounter a great danger! Bless me!"

The old gentleman was overcome.

It was pretty lucky on the whole that the maid's story was not called for, though she told it below stairs with such great assiduity that Will has not yet ceased to be regarded with deep respect by all those who ever saw him. He fairly achieved his honourable scars, and the father, whom he took to his bosom, has not yet repented of the gift of his daughter.

R. Y.

## WARNED BY THE PLANETS.

### CHAPTER XLIV.

AFTER her marriage at the "White Hart" inn, Judith, accompanied by her husband, took the rail for Strathpey Station in Northumberland. For one reason she thought that it might be soothing to Hendrick's mind to take him back to the familiar scenes of his boyhood; for another she felt dreadfully anxious in regard to Lady Marguerite, and could not content herself to remain away from her.

"I promised my poor, dear lady to keep my eye on her," she said to Hendrick, "and I must keep my word; the poor, motherless young thing will need me too, for as sure as you and I are man and wife there's trouble ahead for her."

So they took rail for Northumberland, arriving at Strathpey Station in the wane of a summer afternoon.

Judith went straight to the "King's Arms," a public-house just below the castle, and leaving Hendrick there, she made her way in search of the earl.

The earl himself was the first person upon whom her eyes rested. He was pacing up and down beneath the oaks, at the lower end of the park, his face so white and sad that the tears rose to Judith's eyes as she looked at him. A swift and sudden thought flashed through her mind as she stood irresolute in the glow of the afternoon sunlight. She put her hand to her head and tore away the flaxen locks she had put on, leaving her own brown braids exposed.

"I'll not play Janet Burns a day longer," she said; "I'll be my own true self or no one."

She advanced with a swift, ringing step, startling the brown deer from their covert, and attracting the earl's attention.

"I beg your pardon, my lord," she said, pausing in front of him; "but have you forgotten Judith Ford?"

The earl looked up, stared blankly for a moment, and then cried out:

"Why, Judith, can it be you? Where have you kept yourself all these years, my girl?"

"It is Judith Ford, my lord," she replied, "and I have been in a great many places in the last ten years—I was married in Lancashire yesterday!"

"Married! why, I thought that Hendrick was lost at sea!" replied the earl. "So you've solaced yourself with a new lover?"

"No, my lord, I should never have married if I had not found Hendrick. He was not lost, he was saved—I found him in a madhouse, while I was in search of my poor lady!"

The earl flushed and glanced up inquiringly.

"Your lady, Judith?"

"My lady, Lord Strathpey, and your late countess."

Her voice rang like a bell, and her steadfast brown eyes met his gaze unflinching.

"I have been searching for her," she went on,

steadily, "ever since that night fourteen years ago when she was caught up and hurried away from Aukland Oaks. My lord, do you know that your poor wife was as sane as you or I when they carried her off and shut her up in a madhouse?"

The earl grew deathly white, and gasped once or twice for breath.

"Why have you come to me with this?" he demanded; "how does it concern me whether she was sane or not, or what they did with her?"

Judith faced him unflinchingly.

"How does it concern you, my lord? She was your wife, your true and faithful wife."

"She was not. She was false!" he thundered.

"Lord Strathpey," Judith went on, calming and convincing him by the power of her quiet voice and steady eye, "you are mistaken—your wife was true. She never wronged you in thought, much less in deed; and now that she is dead—"

"Dead!" he gasped, "is she dead?"

"She's dead," replied Judith, solemnly.

"They stole her away. Sir Marshall Neville and his doctors came upon her at the midnight hour, and caught her up like a guilty criminal, and carried her off to a desolate old place called Milford Grange, away down upon the Lancashire coast; and she remained there for years, shut up with raving maniacs—a terrible life, my lord, for a fair and delicate woman like Lady Marguerite Strathpey."

The earl stood silent and motionless as a statue, his face as white and rigid as the face of a dead man.

"Go on!" he commanded, in a hoarse voice, "but how do you know this?"

"I know it, my lord," continued Judith, "because I have spent fourteen years in solving the mystery. I have travelled over England a dozen times. I made up my mind to find out, and I did. From Milford Grange the Countess of Strathpey was transferred to the Insane Asylum on Lancaster Moor, and there again for years she was a prisoner shut up in a dreary cell."

"I have been there, my lord," she continued, carried away by her emotions. "It was there I found poor Hendrick—and I saw the very cell in which the countess had been kept—a little dusky box—with one dingy window and a straw pallet for her bed. But the keepers told me she never murmured, she was always patient and kind and gentle. But she said she had a mission to accomplish before she died, and she should try to make her escape."

"And she did try; she got an old file, and for months and months she worked at the lock of her door—just think of it, my lord," cried Judith, with tears streaming down her cheeks, "just think of her little, tender hands, and she working and fling at her lock through the lonely midnight hours while you and Lady Neville were in your grand chambers, with wax lights and flowers and music all about you."

"Stop," gasped the earl, putting up his hands as if to shut out the sight; "I cannot hear it."

"But you must hear it, my lord," continued the inspired girl; "she could bear to suffer it, and you shall hear it and do her memory justice. She worked with her old file, till at last the lock yielded, and she made her escape."

"But the river below the asylum was very high from recent rains, and in attempting to cross the broken bridge she was drowned. They found her shawl the next morning just below the bridge, and a week after her body drifted ashore lower down. And she was buried by stranger hands. I saw her grave, my lord; she was buried in the common Potter's Field that lies at the back of the asylum."

"And standing by that grave, Lord Strathpey," she went on, "I vowed that I would seek you and tell you her story, and I have kept my vow. You know now what she suffered; and suffered innocently, for she was a sane woman, and as true a wife as there is in England. Her mother's heart was right, for I tell you, Lord Strathpey, that as sure as you and I stand here this hour, under this blue sky, that little boy down in the Tyrol valley was your son, your own son, and the one who bears your name, and is to be your heir, is an impostor."

She paused, but the earl uttered no word in answer. He stood facing the summer sunset, his hands locked behind him, as white and rigid and icy as if he had been suddenly turned into stone. Judith observed him narrowly, and then went on:

"I beg your pardon, my lord; and it hurts me dreadfully to pain you so, but my poor lady's name must be cleared. She was true to you, my lord, as must be cleared. She was true to you, my lord, as you would readily have discovered if you had only been patient and looked into the matter. Her only objection to reclaim her child and restore him to his rights. She was true to you, and she loved you to the last. When you were on the point of a duel with Colonel Vernon it was her work his refusing to fight at the last moment. She travelled all the way

from Auckland Oaks, and went down on her knees before him, and never left him till he had promised not to fight. And the very last day I ever saw her, as we were driving home from London, after she had seen her children in Lady Neville's grounds, and would not speak to them because your lordship had forbidden it, that very afternoon she said to me:

"Whenever you see my dear husband again, Judith, tell him that I freely forgive him and love him as fondly as ever. He will know how true I was to him when I am gone."

Still he stood there, cold, silent, motionless, his ghastly face turned toward the purple sunset hills. Judith watched him with a feeling of awe, and began to fear that she had gone too far. She laid her hand upon his arm.

"My lord," she said, "had you not better return to the castle?"

The touch of her hand roused him.

He shook it off fiercely.

"What does it matter where I go now?" he burst out. "Girl, why didn't you murder me at once? It would have been far more merciful. If what you've told me is true there's not a soul so utterly lost as mine."

And with the words he turned and strode away.

Judith looked after him with a deep sigh.

"Poor man," she murmured, "how I do pity him. But I had to clear my lady's slandered name!"

She stood a moment irresolute, debating within herself whether she should go to the castle and seek an interview with Lady Marguerite or return to Hendrick at the "King's Arms."

All of a sudden, while she stood thus, something grasped her shoulder with a grip so fierce and strong that the girl barely repressed a cry of pain.

Turning quickly, she stood face to face with the young lord.

He wore his shooting suit and had a gun across his shoulders.

Judith knew him in an instant and met the baleful glare of his tigerish eyes with her serene and steady gaze.

"Well, Lord Angus," she asked, quietly, "what is it?"

"It is this!" he panted, his voice deep and hoarse with suppressed fury. "I have heard every word of the idle tale you have been telling. Do you dare to say that I am not the Earl of Strathspay's son?"

"I dare to say it, my lord," was her quiet answer, "because it is true! You are not the earl's son."

His grip tightened on her shoulder and his eyes glared more fiercely.

"Woman!" he hissed, "swear to me this moment, swear before Heaven never to utter those words again, or by my soul I'll put this bullet through your heart." He removed his hand from her shoulder and raised his gun.

"There's not a soul in sight of us," he went on, "and just below there is a deep gully; 'tis the easiest thing in the world for me to pop you down like a pheasant, and drag your carcass there; and if you refuse I'll do it! Will you swear? I'll not have my prospects ruined by a prating meddler like you."

His face was something terrible to look upon, with that murderous glare in his eyes. He brought the gun to a sure aim, and stood with his finger on the trigger.

But some power in the girl's soul stranger than her mere woman's strength made her fearless. She faced him undimly, her steady eyes never wavering for an instant.

"No, young man," she answered, in a ringing voice, "I will not swear—you are not Lord Strathspay's son!"

"Then die!"

Simultaneous with the fiendish words there came a blinding flash and a sharp report, but as the gun went off a quick blow struck it upward, and the deadly bullet, aimed at Judith's heart, went crackling through the oak boughs overhead.

"Murderer!" cried the earl, facing his astonished son, "do you think I could own such a dastard as you are?"

The young man slowly whitened, till his very lips were colourless.

"Own me or not as you will," he muttered, as he picked up his gun; "but as sure as I have life I'll be your heir, and that sooner than you think for."

"Silence," stormed the earl; "don't you threaten me. I'll hand you over to the authorities to be tried for your crime. Your life is in my hands."

"And yours in mine," replied Lord Angus as he strode away.

The earl stood for a moment like one stunned. At last he turned to Judith.

"You are right, my girl," he said, his voice thrilling with an unutterable pathos, "and my poor wife was right—he is not my son!"

#### CHAPTER XLV.

THE earl and his family were comfortably established at Ravenswood, amid the Scottish highlands, and Lady Neville and the dowager countess were wholly engrossed with plans and preparations for the approaching marriage. The trousseau had been ordered, and was progressing in Paris, on the grandest scale; and the earl, true to his promise, had purchased for Marguerite a set of diamonds even rarer and more costly than the ones she had lost, and Marguerite received them, kissing her father in silence, and uttering no word of the misery she felt. For her father's face was wan and sorrowful beyond all description, and the Scottish breezes rather seemed to increase than to cure his malady.

"You see, my love," said Lady Neville, with tears on her well-preserved cheeks, as she admired the costly stones, "you see how your dear father dotes on you, and tries to please you—and do, my child, if you have any love or gratitude for him, try to get over your silly repugnance to Sir Bayard. Your father regards him as a son, and has set his heart on seeing you his wife. You see how his strength is failing day by day; and, Marguerite, I entreat you, do not disappoint his hopes, do not shorten his life, by this folly of yours. You will love Sir Bayard well enough when you are once his wife; there's never any fear of a woman lacking in love for her husband."

Lady Marguerite, with the costly casket in her hand, went slowly to her own chamber; and there, awaiting her coming, she found her old attendant and companion, Janet Burns. Her hopeless young eyes brightened at sight of her.

"Why, Janet," she cried, joyously, extending her hand in welcome, "have you come back again at last? I am so glad, so glad to see you!"

Janet took the slender little hand and kissed it respectfully, her eyes running over with tears at sight of Pearl's pale, sad face. "Yes, Lady Marguerite," she replied, "I have come back to stay for good now, if you want me."

"If I want you? Oh, Janet, you know I want you!" cried Marguerite. "I've had a cross, awkward girl ever since you left me, and I liked you so much—indeed, I'm as glad to see you as if you were my sister. I'll take you back this very minute."

Janet smiled kindly at her childish impetuosity. "It gratifies me very much," she said, in her grave, refined manner, "to know that you like me—I am a true friend to you, Lady Marguerite. Do you know," she added, hesitatingly, "that I used to serve your mother once?"

"Oh, Janet!" cried the girl, crossing the room and seating herself by the maid's side, "and you never told me before. I have always longed so to hear something of my mother. Janet, tell me how she looked."

"Exactly like you, my lady; two twin roses are not more alike, and she was the best, the sweetest woman in the wide world."

Pearl's tears were falling like rain.

"If I could have seen her—if she had only lived," she moaned. "Aunt Neville says she died when I was a babe; did she, Janet?"

"Well, yes—your last her when you were little more than a babe, my lady."

"Poor mamma! Oh, why couldn't she have been spared to me! It will be a great comfort, Janet, to have you with me now that I know that you used to know and love my mother."

"I did love her, Lady Marguerite; and I promised her faithfully that I would always keep my eye on you, and help you whenever I could—that is why I have come back to you."

"But, Janet, why did you not tell me all this before?" asked Pearl, in astonishment.

"Because I had reason, my dear lady, for keeping silent. I was afraid if I made myself known to Lady Neville she would refuse to employ me, and even now I'm pretty sure she'll object when she finds out who I am."

"Why, Janet, what can you mean?"

"I mean, Lady Marguerite," she replied, "that I am not Janet Burns, but Judith Ford, or Judith Dixon now, for I have married since I went away. And this hair," she went on, removing her flaxen wig, and revealing her own glossy brown braids, "is not mine any more than the name."

Lady Marguerite started in amazement.

"Well," she said, at last, "I like you even better without the flaxen locks; but really you overwhelm me with surprise. I can't see what it all means, or why Aunt Neville should object to you."

"There are circumstances, Lady Marguerite, that I am not a liberty to explain, and in regard to which you must not question me. I was your dear mother's maid and companion for years, and I promised her to look after you, and I will. Your father, the earl, has engaged me, and my husband too. He wants Hendrick for gamekeeper when he goes back to the

castle, and I am to be with you, and he has promised to make it all straight with Lady Neville. So, if you want me, I'm at your service at once."

The earl did make it right with Lady Neville, after a painful and stormy discussion, in which the old dead-and-gone griefs were resurrected, and the bitter heart-wounds torn open. He reproached his sister in the severest tone for her action in regard to his wife, and avowed his intention to go down to Lancaster Moor and have her body exhumed and brought to the castle for decent burial.

Lady Neville remonstrated with all her eloquence, but Lord Strathspay was a resolute man when his mind was once made up, and she failed to move him.

"Let me alone," he said, bitterly; "we have done enough—it is needless that we make what repairing we may. Don't you see that Lady Strathspay was right?—the boy who bears my name is not my son—she was right, and we called it insanity and imprisoned her in a madhouse. Canilla, you cannot understand how I feel about it, so let me alone—let me have my way in peace."

"But, Angus, for Heaven's sake," implored his proud sister, "think of the disgrace, the shame—the affair rest—don't make it public again! For Marguerite's sake let it rest."

"Marguerite is no dearer to me than her mother was," replied the earl, an angry flush rising to his death-white cheeks; "and I shall do her mother justice, no matter what the cost may be. I've enough on my soul now. If I can assure myself that my poor wife was true to me—that I accused her falsely—I'll make it known throughout the length and breadth of England, and stand before the whole world in my true character—a jealous brute, a murderer!"

Lady Neville knew too well that farther remonstrance would be a waste of words, and she groined in agony, half wishing that her brother's madly might interpose, and lay him in the grave that must soon receive him, rather than her proud name should be so tarnished and scandalized.

But the earl's life seemed like his will, a something indomitable and unconquerable.

Lord Angus did not accompany the family to Ravenswood; he remained behind, not at the castle, for the earl had forbidden him ever again to cross his doors; but at "The Cedars," the invited guest of Lady Cecilia Drummond. Her ladyship and the young earl were getting to be fast friends.

A day or two after their departure the young man mounted his roan mare and started for the cottage of Doctor Renfrew. The results of his last visit had by no means damped the ardour of his passion, or weakened his determination to make pretty Maggie his own. On the contrary, he was more in love, more desperately in earnest than ever.

"She shall be mine," he swore as he galloped across the downs, "she shall be mine, if it cost me my life to win her."

What was his surprise and disappointment to find the cottage locked up and his pretty bird flown.

"Where's the doctor?" he demanded of the old man servant.

"Gone this week an' more, yer lordship, to visit his sister as lives in the Scottish highlands."

And the angry young peer resolved with a bitter exclamation that to the Scottish highlands he would follow.

(To be continued.)

#### FACETIÆ.

THE only thing that can live in fire is a live coal.

A CLOCK in a factory in Harlem was expelled from the premises the other day by the request of the working men, because it had not struck for eight hours.

A FRENCH gentleman who had rescued from drowning a boy that had fallen in the Seine, at Paris, was requested by the lad's father to swim out for his son's cap, as he was already wet through.

THE HEIGHT OF COMMERCIAL MORALITY.

"Oh, I want to buy another of those pretty top-hats, like the one I bought last week, you know."

"Shure an' we've given up keepin' them entirely, my lady! For as soon asiver we got them in we sold them out!"—Punch.

HOW DOES IT STRIKE YOU?

Mr. Houseloud: "Robin, you didn't come to Sunday-school yesterday, and went for a wicked walk instead. Have you not been smitten by remorse?"

Delinquent: "Wuss nor that! Feather smelted o' wi' his strap!"—Fun.

WAGES AND WIVES.

Philanthropic Farmer: "Well, Tomkins, after this week, instead of paying you partly in cider, I shall give you two shillings extra wages."

Tomkins: "No, thanky, master, that wunt do for me!"



**Farmer:** "Why, man, you'll be the gainer; for the cider you had wasn't worth two shillings!"  
**Tomkins:** "Ah, but you see I drinks the cider myself; but the ow'd 'ooman 'il'er the two shillun!"  
*—Punch.*

**A SHAVE.**—The Dublin barbers are about to increase their charges for a shave. If the Dublin boys are sharp they will retaliate with another "shave." If the wielder of the razor is a raiser of prices the customer had better raise a beard.—*Pun.*

**A CHIP.**—The wood-choppers' strike has not been productive of serious inconvenience, as, fortunately, we do not eat our food with chop-sticks; it may however be the means of waking up another hard-working and underpaid class of men—those who "chop" logic!—*Pun.*

**A COMET'S TALE.**  
 Philosophers sometimes make great discoveries, with which the rest of the world has long been acquainted. A *savant*, writing recently to pooh-pooh the notion of a comet coming into collision with the earth and destroying it, said:

There could be no collision—no shock; because you might put all the solid parts of a comet into a claret glass.

Just as if nobody had ever had a glass of "comet port."—*Pun.*

**A MIST-RT.**  
 The poet who spoke of morning "devouring the dark" was not so extravagant after all in his philosophy. We learn from a Leeds paper the following fact that bears out his figure—

TO BE LET the estate of about ninety acres of fog, well watered and sheltered.

We Londoners are accustomed to consume our own smoke in the shape of fog, but it is a sort of "estate" which we think would suit best if it "was to be let"—alone.—*Pun.*

**THE GOLDEN AGE.**—Great news from across the Atlantic! The problem which has baffled so many heads through so many ages has at last been solved in the autumn season in America. A lucky and mysterious individual in California has discovered the long-sought art of transmuting the baser metals into gold, and asserts his ability to supply it by the ship-load. The news is not without its interest for us, for, with bullion to any amount within her reach, America cannot possibly think of taking the comparatively few sovereigns Mr. Lowe was going to send over, by a Treasury clerk, between now and next "Fall."—*Punch.*

**SEA-SIDE DRAMA.**  
*Mrs. De Tomkins (sotto voce to Mr. De T.):* "Lad-o-vie, dear, there's Algerion playing with a strange child! Do prevent it!"

*Mr. De T. (ditto to Mrs. De T.):* "How on earth am I to prevent it, my love?"

*Mrs. De T.:* "Tell its parents Algerion 's just recovering from scarlet fever or something!"

*Mr. De T.:* "But it isn't true!"

*Mrs. De T.:* "Oh, never mind. Tell them all the same!"

*Mr. De T. (aloud):* "Ahem! Sir, you'd better not let your little girl play with my little boy. He's only just recovering from—er—scarlet fever!"

*Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins (together):* "It's all right, sir!—so's our little gal!"—*Punch.*

**"NOT SO FAST!"**  
*Old Gent. (soliciting in the Wilds of Glen-machie):* "Ah, well; this is very jolly! Weakly's a great blessing—not that I'm a rich man—but after the turmoil and worry of business, to be able to retire to these charming solitudes, the silence only broken by the grateful sounds of the rippling stream ('bura, I mean, ah! I nearly had him then!) and the hum of the bee!—to be able to leave London and its tiresome millions, and forget all the low—"

*Voice from the Bridge (ubiquitous "Arry"):* "Could yer 'blige us with a worm, gov'nour?"!—*Punch.*

**LICENSING ACT MITIGATION.**—The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police has power to mitigate the vexatious tyranny of the "Intoxicating Liquors Act." Accordingly Colonel Henderson has licensed several of the taverns situated near theatres and other places of amusement to remain open on working days until 1 a.m. The *Times* expects that this concession will, as regards all public-houses so situated in the British capital, become general. At Oxford the mayor and magistrates have resolved to extend the hours of closing on week days to 11:30 and to 10:30 on Sundays. They had good reasons for so doing besides those contained in petitions addressed to them by university students, licensed victuallers, and the general public. Petitions alone will perhaps suffice to bring all other mayors and magistrates to their senses.—*Punch.*

**SERVE THEM RIGHT.**  
 In a leader on the strikes impending or threatened, and especially on the Bakers' Strike, the *Post* makes some remarks appropriate to the breakfast.

tables on which it lies in proximity to muffins and hot rolls.—

The sympathies of the public were entirely with the men in respect of the inordinate amount of labour which they were required to perform. But in jumping from the extreme of quiescence under acknowledged hardship to that of uncompromising dictation they have forfeited those sympathies, and should the people of London be put to serious inconvenience by the strike they will not forget to whom they owe that inconvenience, and they will witness the sufferings of the men on strike with indifference.

No; not with indifference. Now that combination laws no longer exist to punish even the most unreasonable of strikes the sufferings of the men on strike are the only protection against trades unions the public have. If the journeyman bakers, without just cause, deliberately determine to deprive the public of bread, it is with quite another feeling than indifference that the public will see them, through their own act, served with their own sauce; namely, nothing to eat with nothing. Complacency is rather the feeling with which we see those who have annoyed us rightly served.—*Punch.*

### ONLY A WAIF OF THE STREETS.

"Only a waif of the streets!"

The words fell heavy as lead  
 From the lips of a lady, lovely and proud,  
 Who caught her skirts as she passed in the crowd

From the wan little thing, who but said,  
 "A penny, please, for the crossing-sweep,  
 My mother and me from starving to keep!"

Perchance the waif was but a "fraud!"

Who knows?—so many are so;  
 But lady, if you had but turned a look  
 At the poor, pale one whom your words had struck

As with a cruel blow,  
 Your heart must have melted, if not of stone—

Which perhaps it is—at that sight alone.

She stood on the kerb in her rage,  
 Barefooted, and broom in hand,  
 But the dirty face was fully redeemed  
 By the sad wide eyes that filled and streamed

As they followed your form so grand;  
 And the white pinched lips were quivering too,  
 And her bosom heaved; but you never knew.

You never knew, or dreamed,  
 That perhaps a breaking heart  
 Had received from you, in your thoughtless scorn,

The final blow which had coldly torn  
 Its last poor string apart;  
 Never thought of it, night or day,  
 When you dance or sing, or when you pray.

"Only a waif of the streets!"  
 Oh! you of power and place,  
 If you must refuse your petty alms  
 To poor little quivering childlike palms,

Do it with pitying grace;  
 Not with a word that may stab with its spleen—

Not with a scorn that may scathe unseen.

N. D. U.

### GEMS.

**WELL-MANAGED** faults often make a better figure than ill-managed virtues.

He who gets angry in discussion while his opponent keeps cool holds the hot end of the poker.

**SELF-LOVE** is at once the most delicate and the most tenacious of sentiments; a mere nothing will wound it, but nothing on earth will kill it.

**STRONG** minds, like hardy evergreens, are most verdant in winter, when feeble ones, like tender summer plants, are leafless.

If the man who has got to the top of the hill by honesty is ashamed to turn about and look at the lowly road he has travelled the deserves to be taken by the neck and hurled to the bottom again.

**COURAGE**, when genuine, is never cruel. It is not fierce. It foresees evil. Its trepidations come either before or after danger. In the midst of peril it is calm and cool. It is generous, especially to the fallen. It is seldom attained.

**MEN** of high or mean birth may be possessed of good qualities; but falling into bad company they become vicious. Rivers flow with sweet waters; but having joined the ocean they become undrinkable.

### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

**FRENCH LOAF CAKE.**—Beat four eggs with three cups of sugar, one of butter, and one of milk. Sift one teaspoonful of soda and two of cream-tartar in

five cups of flour, add one lemon with the peel grated and two cups of grated cocoanut. Bake in round loaves like bread, and slice it.

**PULVERIZED SOLID COD LIVER OIL.**—The difficulty of overcoming the nauseating qualities of cod liver oil has attracted the attention of many pharmacists, among others of M. Tissier, who has lately published the results of his experiments. He takes of white gelatin 4 parts, 25 parts of distilled water, the same of simple syrup, and 50 parts of refined powdered sugar. The gelatin is heated in a water bath, with the water and syrup, till dissolved. The cod liver oil and sugar being mixed in a mortar; the two compounds are then stirred together, and the stirring continued till the mixture is cold. It will then appear as a gelatinous mass, and powdered sugar is then added till a firm paste is made, which, after being cut into small pieces, is left to become so hard as to be easily granulated in a mortar. The second addition of powdered sugar will bring the quantity up to 250 parts, of which 20 per cent. will be cod liver oil. It is to be kept in a tightly stoppered bottle.

### STATISTICS.

**THE POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL AT ZURICH.**—This school, which now has been established 17 years, numbers, during the present scholastic year, 689 students, as compared with 448 in the previous year, of which 168 were students of the university, against 281 of the previous year. In the school of architecture the number of students was 23—11 being Swiss and 11 foreigners. In the school of engineering the number of students was 282, of which 60 were Swiss and 262 foreigners. In the mechanical department 135 (62 Swiss and 73 foreigners). In the school of chemistry applied to manufactures 91 (41 Swiss and 50 foreigners). Forestry 18 students (14 Swiss and 4 foreigners). Agriculture 7 (2 Swiss and 5 foreigners). In the school for professors 33 students (only one foreigner). The number of students in the preliminary course was 121, being 20 Swiss and 101 foreigners. Out of the total number, 632, there are 242 Swiss and 447 students of other nations; of this number 191 are Austrian, 94 Russians, 50 Italians, 42 Germans, 17 Roumanians and Servians, 13 French, 9 English, 9 Swedish or Norwegians, 6 Dutch, 5 Danes, 4 North Americans, 3 Turks, 2 East Indians, and 1 West Indian, the only European States not represented at Zurich being Belgium, Spain, and Portugal.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

**GEORGE CRUIKSHANK**, the well-known artist, completed his 80th year on the 29th of September.

It is stated that the damage done to Canterbury Cathedral by the recent fire will necessitate an expenditure on the edifice of about 4,000*l*.

SOME Dutch speculators are said to be exporting pot to England in consequence of the high price of coal.

**LORD CARTHART**, the president of the Royal Agricultural Society, has offered a prize of 100*l*. for the best essay on the causes of, and the remedy for, the potato disease.

A COURT in England has recently decided that the presence of ghosts in a house is a sufficient reason for annulling the contract between landlord and tenant.

**A TRIUMPHAL COLUMN.**—A column in honour of Prussian victories, which is to be erected at Berlin, in front of the new palace of the German parliament, will have a casing of bronze, the metal of which will be from the French-guns taken in the campaign of 1870-71. The original intention was to make use also of the Austrian cannon captured in 1866, but since the interview at Berlin that idea has been abandoned.

**DEMOLITION OF CITY CHURCHES.**—Two more City churches are destined to follow those which have been destroyed; their revenues will go to increase the endowments of other churches. The doomed edifices are St. Martin's Outwich, and St. Peter's-de-Poor. When incumbent of the latter Bishop B. Hoare wrote his once-famous paper in opposition to the holdings forth of Dr. Sauerbeck, then chaplain of St. Mary Overie, and Bishop Blackall, of Exeter.

**THE SWORD OF THE BLACK PRINCE.**—A discussion is going on amongst the antiquaries as to what became of the sword of the Black Prince, the scabbard of which was one of the objects removed hastily from the tomb of the prince at the recent fire in Canterbury Cathedral. The sword disappeared during the civil war in the reign of Charles I. There are two or three weapons in different collections which are claimed as being the real weapon, but in each case the proof is incomplete, and the original blade remains undiscovered.

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. J.—The surname of the Queen is Guelph, for being a queen regnant Her Majesty did not take that of her husband, the late Prince Consort, which was D'Essex.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN.—The only cure for round shoulders and stooping is a determination to stand upright, and the ordinary athletic open-air sports, games and pastimes so well known and practised by English lads.

A. B. C.—To rid a house of fleas and other vermin sprinkle the floor well with dry salt, and well scrub afterwards with salt and soda in the water. This process being repeated, the pest will disappear.

A HERTFORDSHIRE CORRESPONDENT.—Apply by letter, enclosing testimonials as to character and fitness for the situation, to the manager of the department you name. It is not usual to apply to any other individual.

EMIGRANT.—Messrs. Simpkin and Co., "Stationers' Hall Court, London, would supply you with a cheap and useful "Guide," or "Advice to Emigrants," which would well serve your purpose.

B. BATHMAN.—Being 5ft. 4in. at seventeen, by a freak of nature you may reach 5ft. by the time you have completed your twentieth year; it is rarely, however, that persons grow after their eighteenth birthday.

A. E. H.—Stains of almost any description may be removed from linen if the article so stained be placed in cold water and allowed to remain therein for a short time; out if the stains have become thoroughly fast through the process of boiling, it is obvious that they cannot be removed.

FROM ONE OF THE FAMILY.—We cannot advise you without seeing a copy of the will; all depends upon its wording. The executors may or may not have the power they claim, the terms of the will would have to be consulted, and a respectable solicitor; it would save you both trouble and expense.

A REGULAR SUBSCRIBER.—A simple and excellent pomade may be made in the following manner:—A small quantity of bees-wax scraped very finely, two ounces of lard, two pennyworth of salad oil, mixed together and placed near the fire until the wax is melted; when nearly solid add a little scent of whatever kind preferred.

J. G. B.—Naturalization confers upon a foreigner the rights and privileges of a British subject, which, in fact, the very act makes him. We do not, however, without unqualified residence in Great Britain, wealth, influence, or distinguished public services, he could become a Justice of the Peace, Member of Parliament, or a Baronet. The estimable alderman named by our correspondent, who has passed the civic chair, is certainly not a foreigner.

A CONSTANT READER.—Do your duty to your master as he does or has done his duty to you. If he is teaching you his trade and treating you kindly, and not departing from the terms of his indenture, go with him into the country without complaining, for it will in all probability be to your interest so to do. Whether your master can compel you to go with him depends upon your indentures, and of that those who apprehended you are the best judges—ask them.

A CONSTANT READER.—1. The object of tattooing being to leave indelible marks upon the skin, if the process has been skilfully performed you will find no means of removing them without at least leaving scars behind. 2. We cannot recommend cheap medicines that will restore a constitution sapped by vicious practices. If not too old, and you have a will of your own, you may by the aid (being so poor as you state you are) of the advice of an hospital surgeon become restored to health.

MEGGIE SMITH.—We cannot help thinking that our correspondent (notwithstanding her assertion to the contrary) must conduct herself in some unbecoming manner when out walking, as it is rarely a gentleman will accost a lady in the street without some previous acquaintance with her. We advise "Maggie" in future to be more circumspect and she will doubtless be subject to fewer annoyances. 2. It is the etiquette and mark of a gentleman to raise his hat either upon meeting with or parting from a lady.

ANNIE B.—Take our advice, renounce flirting, it is unladylike and shows a frivolous mind; and possibly in time the lover of your childhood, seeing the alteration in your conduct, may experience a revulsion of feeling and once more make advances towards a renewal of old times; but it would be far more commendable if "Annie B." (who acknowledges that she has treated her old friend slightly) were the first to make the amends honorable; and he would no doubt respect and admire her all the more.

J. R.—Although the particulars you have sent in reply

to "M. S." are very necessary, you have withheld others which are equally so. For example, the personal appearance of an individual is not unimportant, while at your time of life the tastes and disposition you have both cultivated and neglected are material circumstances to be taken into consideration by any lady who is disposed to read your letter a second time. That you should have omitted even to allude to these points is we are afraid an indication that you can never become the man to her mind. The instinct of a woman is very decided after she has observed the application of—to employ the fashionable phrase just now current—the "crucial" test to a man's pretensions.

WAS we find answers to his three first questions in any elementary school book, and therefore in consideration of the space required for other correspondents should not have put such commonplace questions to us. 4. As to his family's crest and coat of arms (providing they have ever been entitled to them) he may find them by calling at any heraldic engraver's shop, provided with the name of the country from which his family sprang. 5. A County Court Judge has power of issuing a judgment summons for any amount we believe over one shilling. 6. A Peer only can use a coronet as the symbol of his grade in the nobility. The coronet has naught to do with the crest, the first appurtenance alone to personal rank, the latter belongs to every cadet of his family. 7. We are not aware of the average height of a male whose age is nineteen; the average varies in various countries. Among the Patagonians it may be 5ft. 6in., or 7ft. Among the Bushmen it may be 4ft. 4in., or 5ft.

## ONE OF THE HANDS.

"One of the hands" went through the archway,

Black with the grimy touch of trade,  
One of the hands "of Barr and Barter,"

Out of the sun into the shade;

Strength in the nervous, active fingers,  
Strength in the living thorns of steel,

To pluck their worth from Life and Labour.

Through master-touch o'er stream and wheel.

Only "a hand" to Barr and Barter,  
Value affixed in pounds and pence;

One figure in the count financial,  
One item in the week's expense.

A bird sang loud up in the linden,  
The factory hand looked up and smiled;

Again in merry distant England  
He walked, a careless, happy child;

Then hurried on into the shadow,  
Out of earth's sunshine evermore

Straight to a death of sudden horror  
That crouched within a waiting door.

A crash! a cry! The harnessed demon  
Leaped from its bound and burst its bands;

Smote, like a human alme revengful,  
Out of its path—one of the "hands!"

None moaned above the shabby coffin,  
And Barr and Barter said, "Twas sad—"

Quite dreadful! It was English Jimmy,  
The best mill hand they ever had."

Across the sea, the English lassie  
Treasures a sunny look of hair,

A slender ring and little Bible,  
With kiss and tear and reverent care,

Though the mill hand can never claim her,  
And even graves are fixed apart

A men's' keeps her own for ever  
The love that filled an English heart.

And through the tears that softly glimmer  
She reads how One in yonder land

On earth wrought daily honest labour;  
And won't forget a working "hand."

E. L.

ANNIE, eighteen, tall, fair complexion, dark hair, loving, and well educated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and fond of home.

JENNY, twenty-three, medium height, dark, rather good looking. Respondent must be tall, fair, fond of home, loving, and able to keep a wife.

M. D., eighteen, tall, pretty, and accomplished, would like to correspond with a young gentleman about twenty-one.

CARLO, seventeen, 5ft. 7in., dark-brown hair, considered fairly built, a printer. Respondent must not be over nineteen.

C. H., twenty-one, dark eyes, dark curly hair, 5ft. 9in., rather stout. Respondent must be about eighteen, fair, handsome, and about 5ft. in height preferred.

TORST, twenty-one, tall, dark, and pretty. Respondent must be about twenty-five, tall, handsome, and in a little business; a cheese-monger preferred.

CLEMENT D., twenty-four, tall, rather handsome, and loving. Respondent must be tall, pretty, well educated, able to sing, and about twenty-two.

FLORA S., eighteen, tall, rather fair, dark hair and eyes, loving, domesticated, and good tempered. Respondent must be good looking, tall, steady, fond of home and children.

BILL, twenty, medium height, light complexion and loving. Respondent must be about twenty-four, tall, handsome, loving, fond of music and children, and able to keep a wife comfortably.

SAM T., twenty-three, 5ft. 9in., dark-brown eyes, fair complexion, loving, and in a small business. Respondent must be about nineteen, tall, dark, good pianist, fond of home and children.

BELLA, twenty, medium height, rather stout, has light-brown hair, loving. She would like to correspond with a young man who is tall, handsome, and able to make a wife comfortable; a tradesman preferred.

TORST C., eighteen, medium height, dark complexion, brown hair and eyes, rather pretty, wishes to marry a young gentleman of fair complexion, rather tall, handsome, and possessing a loving heart.

LOTTY, eighteen, tall, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, very loving, and domesticated, wishes to marry a young man

about twenty-three, who is loving and fond of home; a farmer preferred.

LISSIE B., twenty, 5ft. 4in., gray eyes, fair complexion, very loving, and fond of music. Respondent must be about twenty-five, fond of home and children; an officer in the Engineers preferred.

RED ROSE, twenty-two, medium height, very fair, curly hair, loving, and would make a good wife. Respondent must be loving, and not over twenty-seven; a mechanic preferred.

TEDDY S., twenty-two, 5ft. 6in., light-brown hair and blue eyes, in a large business. Respondent must be a tradesman's daughter, about eighteen, of a loving disposition, fond of music, and able to sing.

J. B., twenty-two, medium height, fair complexion, hazel eyes, good tempered, and in the Navy. Respondent must be handsome, and fond of home; daughter of a Lancashire farmer preferred.

ERNEST C., twenty-two, tall, dark, considered handsome, money no object. Respondent must be pretty, accomplished, fond of music, of a loving disposition, and not over twenty.

ALMA G., nineteen, medium height, light-brown hair, hazel eyes, considered very pretty, and domesticated, wishes to correspond with a young man not over twenty-four; a corporal in the Army preferred.

ADDIE, twenty-one, tall, stout, fair complexion, and in a good position. Respondent must be dark, blue eyes, affectionate, fond of home, understand music, and be about eighteen.

K. S. W., twenty, fair, 5ft. 9in., steady, in a good position, well educated, and well connected, wishes to correspond with a dark young lady, middling height, and well educated.

REX, twenty-eight, fair complexion, light hair, wishes to marry a young lady who is dark, loving, fond of home, domesticated, accomplished, of fair education, and fond of home.

BIRDIE, nineteen, dark-brown hair and eyes, fond of home and children, considered fascinating, when of age will have a small income. Respondent must be fair, handsome, fond of home, and about twenty-six; a grocer preferred.

GEORGE E. A., twenty-six, 5ft. 7in., dark complexion, a widower with one child, a carpenter and joiner. Respondent must be about his own age, loving and affectionate, fond of children, able to manage a home and have a little money.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

PHILIP is responded to by—"Emma," twenty, tall, fond of home, loving, and would like to emigrate.

W. A. C. by—"A. G.," is 5ft., has dark hair and eyes, and is a lively, loving, and cheerful disposition.

T. H. D. by—"Emily G.," dare, lively, and a domestic servant; would make a loving wife.

SUSIE by—"Sobriety," twenty-two, tall, fair, in constant work, and very respectable.

J. W. L. by—"Bessie H.," eighteen, tall, dark, fond of music, and has a good voice.

F. W. S. by—"M. A.," tall, dark hair, large dark eyes, a brunette, accomplished, and domesticated.

WILLIAM B. GAY by—"Laughing Gay," thought pretty by her friends.

O. H. F. by—"Nelly Bligh," twenty-one, a respectable servant, and would make a good wife.

PHILIP by—"Loving Emile," nineteen, blue eyes, curling brown hair, well educated, can play the piano, is loving and domesticated.

EDWARD M. M. by—"Augusta," twenty, tall, fair, with dark eyes, very fond of singing, also thoroughly domesticated.

AN ENGINEER by—"Jennie," twenty-four, good looking, a lady by birth, and will take good care of his motherless child.

HELENA by—"R. M.," twenty, 5ft. 6in., gray eyes, rather dark, he will be loving and true to her; is in the Royal Artillery.

L. S. by—"L. L.," twenty, 5ft. 6in., dark, and with a good prospect in a business of his own, considered good looking.

A READER by—"A Loving Girl," fair, handsome, cheerful disposition, very fond of home, and a member of the church.

SAM J. by—"Emily," twenty-six, tall, dark hair, large blue eyes, and fair complexion, well educated, and domesticated.

A CHRISTIAN by—"Alice," eighteen, medium height, very fair with a pretty colour, a loving disposition, fond of music, and extremely fond of home comforts.

DICK by—"May," nineteen, a domestic servant, moderately tall, very fond of music, and a singer in a church choir.

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